

PROTOCONCEPTION OF EXISTENTIAL ROOTEDNESS OF MAN IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF HRYHORII SKOVORODA

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Abstract: *The article presents the experience of Hryhorii Skovoroda's philosophy of thinking in the context of the concept of man's rooting. It is emphasized that the basis for the teaching of the philosopher were moral and ethical reflections, and their main object was the spiritual world of man, knowledge of nature and the essence of personality, possibilities and the necessity of achieving happiness and freedom. The latter is realized through self-knowledge, moral perfection of man, through activities aimed at self-creation and the search for affinity. The understanding of the "affinity of labor" by H. Skovoroda correlates with the concept of man's rooting by virtue of the existential nature and orientation of unrooted man who has no support in the world. The anthropologically-existential character of the concept of "affinity of labor" is emphasized, which makes it possible to define it as a spiritual and practical way of man rootedness, the epicenter of which are moral values and personal feelings.*

Keywords: *existential rootedness of man, affinity of labor, personality, freedom, H. Skovoroda.*

Introduction

The issue of human existence, both practical and theoretical, has always been topical in philosophy and we have faced it, particularly at certain moments of life, notably when we realize it to be problematic, when we try to define the reason for our being and life strategy. Nowadays, under the influence of local "boundary situations" (K. Jaspers) and global existential transformations, life processes increasingly acquire the character of nonlinearity and unpredictability, the variability of personal strategies increases, the stylistics of socio-cultural life of a person is pluralized. Philosophy, by its theorizing of the desirable, possible and proper life, is called to help a person in choosing himself, to organize his own value space, to define a socio-cultural "coordinate system". The real life of modern civilization man is significantly different from the existing humanistic values, and rather testifies, the existence "in Being" as "Being-at-the-Edge", rather than self-sufficient "Being-for-Self". Numerous crises and

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tragedies of XX – beginning of XXI century not only provoked human despondency towards social and cultural ideals and values, but also left man alone with their existential concern, the total absurdity of being. The latter is the basis for recognizing and identifying the issue of man's existential rootedness as one that needs to be solved. The urgency of the study of this issue is exacerbated by the fact that solving the issue of theoretical substantiation of “accustoming” of man into being proved to be problematic by an essentially anthropocentric, existentially irrational and postmodern paradigm as they do not sufficiently actualize the aspects of communication and the inherent worth of two natures of a human beings: the “external” and “internal” ones. In addition, the logic of philosophical reflexive culture around socio-anthropological issues constantly reveals some incompatibility of the fields of its study. A significant disadvantage of many philosophical concepts of existence of man is the fact that some of them have not focused their individual attention on the individual's life as a real process and all-time existential value, while others, on the contrary, have excessively subjectified, psychologized and idealized it.

The methodological basis of the study

Thus, the integral unity of existential-phenomenological, culturological and activity methodologies, supplemented by the method of antithetical dialectics of Ukrainian philosophy, general-philosophical and general-scientific methods have been chosen to be the methodological basis for our study. Within the framework of this synthesis, the existential-phenomenological methodology is used predominantly as a theoretical guideline of consciousness on the manifestation of the entity of a separate human life, an understanding of the immanent ability to be rooted in being as the meaning of existence and the need to include a sovereign personality in communicative relationships and communication with being of “Another” according to personal needs and interests, universal values and meanings of culture.

Productive development of the philosophical concept of existential rootedness is possible only when it is based on a rich world philosophical tradition that is one way or another tangent to the subject of the research, that is, to certain protoconceptions of rootedness. The philosophy of the prominent Ukrainian thinker Hryhorii Skovoroda (1722 – 1794) is an important milestone among them. The heuristic potential of the follow-on revision of the “Ukrainian Socrates” is inexhaustible, but the originality of

judgments, a well-connected philosophy and poetry open up all the new facets of the thinker's work, the study of which in the context of the outlined issue is the purpose of this article. The scientific novelty of the proposed approach consists in the fact that the philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda is considered as the basis for the creation of the author's concept of the existential rootedness of man.

Of course, the philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda was repeatedly chosen as the subject for studying by historians, literary scholars, philosophers, and historians of philosophy, namely by M. Popovich, O. Shevchenko, D. Chyzhevskiy, L. Ushkalov, G. Verbah, T. Chernega, I. Bychko, V. Shevchuk and others. The peculiarities of H. Skovoroda's worldview, his life journey, peculiarities of aesthetics, literary work, philosophy of freedom and a human being, issues of ontology and epistemology in the works of the thinker were explored. However, the philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda as the proto-conception of the existential rootedness of man is being envisaged for the first time.

Note the fact that we determine the existential rootedness of a man as "Being-for-Self" and "Culture of Self", as the maximal completeness of existence of man, self-actualization and self-realization of all its essential powers, capabilities, abilities, meanings of culture, goals and values, horizons of personality temporal space for revealing the existentials of spirituality, creativity, freedom, sovereignty and responsibility. Rootedness as an ontological and existential category is: firstly, an understanding of the inner, spiritual core of the "external" person as a meaning-forming constant of being and the needs for personal self-determination under conditions of problematic being and "being-at the-edges"; secondly, the basis for distinguishing true being as the unity of the desired, existing and proper from "accustoming", imitation, profanation and conformist formalization of life, defined by us as the concept of "deracination" ("disfranchisement") as one of the facets of the socio-cultural estrangement of man; thirdly, the spiritual and practical phenomenon, which testifies the need to identify trends, determinants, forms, levels and means of existential self-preservation, the relation of law, meaning and purpose in the integral organization of human existence².

² T. Tsymbal, *Buttevisne ukorinennya ludyny* [Existential rootedness of man], Kyiv, M.P. Drahomanov NPU, 2005, ss.12-13.

It should be emphasized that one of the first attempts to substantiate the issue of the rootedness of being of a contemporary man in the conditions of the collapse of enlightenment humanism was carried out by a French thinker of the twentieth century Simone Weil (1909 – 1943). During the analysis of her work of the same name – “Rootedness” – it was found that the idea of “accustoming” of a person in the “middle”, “density” of social and political life follows from the real situation of man of the 30-40-ies of the twentieth century, the lack of alternative and uncertainty, the mental and physical torments from totalitarian violence. According to S. Weil, global deracination occurs, firstly, during the aggressive wars, when “deprivation of roots becomes almost a deadly disease for the enslaved peoples”³. However, the conquerors themselves, deracinating others, “cut their own roots”. Secondly, the economic domination of some people over others can lead to the deracination. In addition, the main “poison” of deracinating is money and wage-labor, as a social phenomenon it is completely dependent on money. Even if the worker, does not lose geographical, national roots, but existentially, morally he is devoid of roots, because the essence of his being is not his own life goal, not spiritual, personality forces, but the ability to be a “working material”, “human factor” among deracinated “economic outsiders”. Thirdly, the deracination of human being involves education and culture, focused primarily on pragmatism, extremely fragmented by specialization, entirely deprived of “openness” to the world, to “Another”⁴. Education became nothing more than imposing an artificial culture on a person. The attraction to it does not come from the heart, it is not a consequence of spiritual aspirations, but becomes a condition of false “social prestige”. And culture, which is not based on the connection with national existential traditions, loses ground, nutriment, thereby destroying the past and the future, making “the most serious crime”. Fourthly, sociopolitical deracinating – which is the worst form, according to S. Weil, – lies in the peculiar conquest carried out by the state power in relation to the peoples it is responsible for ...”⁵.

In trying to outline the meaning of the concept of ‘rootedness’, S. Weil proceeds from the fact that this is the need of the human soul the most

³ S. Vejl, *Ukorinennya. Lyst do kliryka* [Rooting. Letter to the cleric] Kyiv, Duch i litera, 1998, s. 36.

⁴ S. Vejl, *Ukorinennya. Lyst do kliryka* [Rooting. Letter to the cleric], Kyiv, Duch i litera, 1998, s. 38.

⁵ *Ibid.*, s. 103.

important and least recognized in theory and in reality, because “a person has roots through a real, active and natural participation in the existence of a community that preserves some of the treasures of the past and some anticipations of the future. This is what happens naturally and – ...caused automatically by the area, birth, profession, environment”⁶.

Man, according to S. Weil, is not only able to achieve an existential rootedness, but has to do it. The very first expression of this duty is the spiritual and mental expression as respect for oneself, “effective, real, and not fictitious” satisfaction of the “mundane needs”. Determining the ways and means to overcome the deracinated existence, S. Weil emphasizes the main disadvantage of the essentially anthropocentric paradigm of human existence that is a guarantee for only a well-fed existence to man. But the sensual-objective level of human existence (the vital life praxis) is the “infinite fineness”, although, under certain conditions, it has a decisive influence”⁷. Rootedness is not possible on the vital life level. Sensibility itself becomes more important in the existence of man when it is mediated by the symbols and meanings of culture, freedom, sovereignty, responsibility, creativity, and spirituality. In addition, “every person needs a lot of roots. It requires taking almost the entire set of moral, intellectual, spiritual life through the mediation of the circles to which it naturally belongs”⁸, and which are “stimuli” that make their life full, intense, and worthwhile.

According to S. Weil, an important “motive force” for overcoming deracination is education and self-education, comprehension of the experience of the people man belong to, providing the most essential personal, ethnic and cultural identity, thus opening the way to self-knowledge and enabling man's rootedness into the world of universal and national culture, and hence – in being, because the existence of man is impossible outside of culture⁹. Thus, Simone Weil is one of the first to criticize the “heat-coldness” of Western European humanism with its ideals of internal and, most importantly, external comfort, thus outlining the contours of the bases for man's ontological rootedness, however, first of all, on the social-political level.

⁶ *Ibid.*, s. 36.

⁷ *Ibid.*, s. 226.

⁸ S. Vejl, *Ukorinennya. Lyst do kliryka* [Rooting. Letter to the cleric], Kyiv, Duch i litera, 1998, s. 36.

⁹ *Ibid.*, s. 43.

According to S. Weil and the author of the article, an important way and the basis for human rootedness is the new organization of labor, which should be the “spiritual center” of orderly social life. In other words, only the society that professes the spirituality of labor, and not forced labor is able to facilitate person’s rootedness. Surprisingly, these reflections of Simon Weil are in harmony with the thoughts of Hryhorii Skovoroda about freedom, spirituality and “affinity of labor” as the purpose and meaning of human life.

Protoconception of rootedness of man in the philosophy of H. Skovoroda

One has to agree that among the other effective ways of the existential rootedness of man, a special place is occupied by a free, creative work aimed at the good, the comprehension of which was traditional for the Ukrainian spiritual culture and humanities as a whole, and inherent in the classical philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda, his doctrine of “affinity of labor”, addressing to which allows us today to see extremes and unilateral priorities in the realization of man¹⁰.

Moral and ethical reflection is the focus of the philosophical concept of H. Skovoroda, since the main object of his reasoning is the spiritual world of man, the knowledge of nature and the essence of man, the possibilities, necessities and ways of achieving happiness and freedom. Existential reflections of H. Skovoroda are directed, first of all, to a man who has no support in the outworld (a man who is not rooted in being – T. Ts.). According to Skovoroda, the gateway to genuine, authentic existence, freedom and happiness can only pass through self-knowledge, moral perfection of a person, being of which is the activity aimed at the continuous creation of oneself, at search of “affinity”.

Note that the separate ideas of the concept of “affinity of labor” were formulated by H. Skovoroda in the sixties of the eighteenth century, but its final meaningful completion was obtained in 1774 and set out in “Conversation, which is called the Alphabet, or the Primer of Peace” and “Fables of Kharkiv”.

¹⁰ The notion of “existential (or being) rootedness of man” is not used in the philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda, but the notion of “roots” is utilized (similar one to the ancient philosophy for which the Ukrainian philosopher takes stand). However, the character of the philosophising of H. Skovoroda, the main categories characterizing the existence of man allow us to consider it as the protoconception of the author’s understanding of the existential rootedness of man.

The general philosophical basis for the concept of “affinity of labor” is the teachings of H. Skovoroda about two nature and three worlds, an epistemological view of the thinker on cognition as self-cognition. “The whole world”, writes H. Skovoroda, “consists of two natures: one is visible, the other is invisible. The visible is called a creature, but the invisible one is God. This invisible nature, or God, permeates and holds all creatures, has always existed, exists and will always exist”¹¹. Such antithetical understanding of the world is related to the ancient notions of being as the unity of opposites. And the meaning of self-cognition involves the realization of the truth, according to which everything in the world consists of two opposite entities: the visible and the invisible ones, the external and the internal, the corruptible and eternal, the bodily and the spiritual, the creature and the God.

Despite the opposition, these entities are inextricably linked, because the invisible entity determines the essence of all that exists, but can exist only in the visible nature. The significance of these two entities can not be evenly, because the basis of all things, the essence of the “inner” (true) man is the invisible entity – the God as a primordial beginning unlimited in time or space, a spirit that carries good and beauty.

According to Skovoroda, the real beingness of man appears when they perceive invisibility, becomes not only physical, but also a spiritual being, when it is connected with its intrinsic nature that is God. But the spiritual existence of man, according to Skovoroda, can not be simply a negation of the natural. On the contrary, one needs to find out how the natural being can coexist and interact with the essentially incommensurable spiritual being. And the philosopher emphasizes that the “visible” and “invisible” nature of man are the one but not blended. In other words, after their fundamental (space-time) characteristics natural and spiritual beings are complementary. Therefore, the existence, being of man always correlates with the natural being and manifests itself as a physical-spiritual one, in which corporeality can be considered as a necessity, and spirituality – as freedom, with its characteristic features, such as freedom of choice and responsibility for the real consequences of the chosen action, act, behavior.

¹¹ H. Skovoroda, *Narcys. Rozmovy pro te: piznaj sebe* [Narcissus. Talks about: Know yourself], [in:] H. Skovoroda, *Piznaj v sobi ludynu*, [Know yourself being man], Lviv, World, 1995, s. 85.

Concordant to Skovoroda, self-building, personality self-creation is a way of gaining humanity and higher measurements of existence. It is not a coincidence that in his philosophising much attention is paid to ethical reflection. It is the one which outlines the functioning of the “inner” man, the inner spiritual world in his comprehensive acts. The reflection of the inner world of man, namely spirituality, acquires the ethical form of humanity precisely because it helps a person to determine the place and purpose in life, to choose the proper “I”, to build and maintain a connection with the world. According to the philosopher, the most important thing in self-determination is the choice between good and evil, sin and grace, proper and uncongenial work.

From the point of view of Skovoroda, the basis for humanity should be considered as not man in general, not humanity in itself, but the understanding of their refraction in the individual qualities of a person. To achieve such an idea of human existence in the world, Skovoroda succeeded in brilliant use of a specific dialectical method, which, according to the definition of the Ukrainian philosopher D. Chizhevskiy, is called antithetical. The method of antichetic knowledge of the world is “a characteristic of the absolute completeness of being, in which the opposite signs are joined, merged”, – writes D. Chyzhevskiy¹². This method differs in plasticity and versatility, since it includes “visible” and “invisible” content, allowing a person to carry out an existential act of taking-the-inward-turn. The result of the latter is the formation of personality as the essence of existence, which reveals its inherent ability not only to suffer, but also to overcome difficulties, to achieve goals, to rejoice in life.

Thus, the existential measurement of man's existence in the philosophy of Skovoroda is a prerequisite for solving any anthropological issue, including the issue of “non-split unity”, the external and internal affinity. After all, one not only live in the natural world: this world is an integral part of one's needs, vital interests, intentions, aspirations, heart inspiration, etc.. That is why Skovoroda calls to love the natural world, to worship it, since it is an eternal belonging of human existence as a way of being. The natural color of the existence is of special significance for the philosopher, testifying his idea of the organic affinity of man with nature, the mood towards affinity with the earth and the native land.

¹² D. Chizhevskiy, *Narysy z istorii filosofii na Ukrainie* [Essays on the History of Philosophy in Ukraine], Kyiv, Oriy, 1992, s.54.

Man as a microcosm in the anthropology of H. Skovoroda is a synthesis of the whole reality. In the existential act, the world and man, man and the world, as Skovoroda considers, are non-split unity, affinity, as emphasizes I. Bychko, and hence the non-split unity of ontology and anthropology¹³. The main object of philosophising of H. Skovoroda is the spiritual world of man, the knowledge of nature and the essence of man, the possibility, necessity and ways of achieving happiness and freedom.

The methodological foundations of Skovoroda's understanding of the existence of a genuine (rooted) person can be considered a "non-split unity" of being and self-knowledge, the knowledge of human "hearts" with their never exhaustive and incomplete interactions.

Self-knowledge refers to the "internal", the true man – the man of the "heart", to the comprehension of God inside him. Such knowledge can not be understood as a one-time act. It is a long-term experience, carried out by the heart, which, in the opinion of H. Skovoroda, is an individual spiritual substance, the basis and source of life of an individual. Referring to the interpretation of biblical symbols, allegories, emblems, and sometimes mythology, H. Skovoroda sees the hidden real inner reality in each surface image, knowing which one acquires the wisdom of life. H. Skovoroda is convinced that all the symbols of the macrocosm and the Bible become meaningful, converge in a person as a microcosm, which can only be realized through the deepening of its own spiritual existence, the existence of a world of timeless values centered in the heart. Such a look at the heart makes it possible to characterize the thinker's doctrine as a cordocentric existentialism characteristic of the Ukrainian philosophical thought, and H. Skovoroda can be considered as one of the founders of the interpretive (hermeneutic) method of human existential.

"The man of the heart" ("inner man") – becomes the center of the microcosm in the thoughts of the thinker, and the heart is the basis for human life. Sometimes Skovoroda identifies the human heart with God, the thought as an impetus to action. However, the most important aspect of the interpretation of the heart by Skovoroda is to look at it as at a moral center of human life. A warm-hearted person is a true man: "Everyone is the one

¹³ A. Bychko, I. Bychko, V. Tabachkovskij, *Istoriya filosofiyi* [History of Philosophy], Kyiv, Lybid, 2001.

which heart one has... judge not from the face, but from the heart"¹⁴. From the ethical point of view, H. Skovoroda distinguishes between the "perfect" heart, the heart of man who has cleansed himself from the "corpse" and "shadow", has learned of himself and his affinity, and an "old" heart, which belongs to a person who has not recognized the abyss of the heart, has not set the fire of love in it, its essence and unity with the world. Thus, the self-knowledge of man in the philosophy of H. Skovoroda is not a procedural-intellectual and cognitive, but an existential-ontological phenomenon, the essence of which consists in affinity with being (rootedness – T.Ts.) and, at the same time, in existential sovereignty, self-realization, self-development.

Proceeding from this, it can be argued that the philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda clearly reflects the ideas of cocentricism of Ukrainian mentality, while the heart, being the central ontological, ethical and existential notion, can act as the spiritual determinant for the existential rootedness of man.

Specifics of H. Skovoroda's philosophy are also connected with the general tendencies of the formation of Ukrainian philosophy. One of these features is the fact that it does not start with natural philosophy, but with anthropology. And since philosophising of H. Skovoroda is, above all, an understanding of the totality of spiritual processes and human relations, then his anthropology can be determined, in our opinion, as existential anthropology.

Understanding spirituality, the importance of knowing oneself, one's inclinations in the process of choosing activities are also emphasized by one of the favorite thinkers of H. Skovoroda – B. Pascal. Thus, in "Thoughts" the philosopher notes that the main thing in human life is the choice of the corresponding activity, the specialty. But sometimes this choice is quite accidental, because instead of choosing labor by vocation, "affinity", a person listens to the idea of the society, which increases the significance of certain types of human activity and makes others "ridiculous". According to B. Pascal, estimates of the environment necessarily influence one's decision and one is mistaken in choosing a way of life: "The power of the custom is so great that those who have simply been created as people by

¹⁴ H. Skovoroda, *Narcys. Rozmovy pro te: piznaj sebe* [Narcissus. Talks about: Know yourself], [in:] H. Skovoroda, *Piznaj v sobi ludyinu*, [Know yourself being man], Lviv, World, 1995, s. 64.

the nature, become representatives of different specialties: entire regions give only masons, others give only soldiers, etc. Of course, the nature is not so monotonous, but it is also customary. Sometimes nature overcomes, holding a person within its innate inclinations, despite the custom ..."¹⁵, but this is possible only if man is actively engaged in the knowledge of himself and the own self-determination.

In substantiating the doctrine of the "affinity of labor", H. Skovoroda relies on the idea of the Greek philosophers (Epictetus, Plato) on the dependence of the destiny of man on its accordance to the natural inclinations. So Epictetus compares life with the theater, and people - with actors performing on the stage of their lives a definite role¹⁶. The antique model "world-theater" and the conceptual understanding of being through theatrical analogies extends during the Renaissance, and during the New Age (E. Rotterdam, F. Bacon, M. Montaigne, etc.).

H. Skovoroda, according to his student M. Kovalinskyi, said: "The world reminds the theater: in order to perform the play with success and praise in the theater, they take on roles according to their abilities. Actor in the theater makes boast of not a noble role, but of a successful performance in general"¹⁷.

Thus, the thinker considers the world of people as a theater of life, and the social roles of people as a set of "affinities". Moreover, the success of man does not depend on the size and significance of the role, but on his compliance with the internal features of the actor, which allow performing the role as best as one can. In the congenital affiliation of each person to a certain activity paradigm (the role in the theater of life), the philosopher sees the wisdom of world order, existential continuity, that is, in our opinion, the possibility of rootedness in being.

But the problem is in knowing by man his own role, the "affinity", given by nature. And, unlike, for example, the French materialists, who reduce the principle of natural conformity to the satisfaction of the bodily needs of men and to the profit, H. Skovoroda's nature is understood as not the material, but the invisible nature, as the spiritual basis and essence of man.

¹⁵ B. Paskal, *Dumky pro religiyu* [Thoughts about religion], Lviv, Missionary, 1995, s. 29.

¹⁶ *Antichnyye filosofyy. Svidetelstva, fragmenty, teksty* [Ancient philosophers. Testimonies, fragments, texts], Kyiv, T. Shevchenko KSU, 1955.

¹⁷ M. Kovalinskyj, *Zhyttya Hryhoriya Skovorody* [Life of Hryhoriy Skovoroda], [in:] H. Skovoroda, *Piznaj v sobi ludynu* [Know yourself being man], Lviv, World, 1995, s. 27.

The principle of “affinity” is the principle of the correspondence of man, one’s inner life and living to the highest intelligent spiritual principle, which determines the meaning of human life. It is “affinity” that is manifestation of “spark of God” in man. H. Skovoroda calls: “Listen to yourself and listen to your Lord. Your father, the king and the mentor, is in you. Listen to yourself, find Him and listen to Him. Only He knows what is affinated to you ...”¹⁸. Thus, man provides himself the path of life on the basis of self-knowledge and its results – the discovery of God and spirituality in himself.

Unlike Plato, who distinguished three main affinities: “affinity for grain production”, “affinity for war”, “affinity for philosophy or management”, Skovoroda emphasizes: “Many posts, many affinities”¹⁹, and notes that none of the “affinities” is more significant than others: “One hundred affinities, one hundred of titles, and all of them are honorable ...”²⁰.

H. Skovoroda views universally the affinity of labor, therefore this principle can be applied to every person, because everyone has an inclination for the related “affiliated” activity, and a person should know and accept the inclination as the necessary condition for the achievement of happiness and freedom. It is in the discovery and realization of his individual “affinity” H. Skovoroda sees the meaning of the life of each man. And this concept is the source one for the philosopher.

If, however, one who seeks wealth, power, glory, goes against the principle of “affinity”, then one finds oneself on the pernicious path of slavery to “blind nature”. One, who does not listen to the demands of a reasonable nature, loses harmony, lives in a state of fear, nausea, and reproach of conscience. The pursuit of disastrous passions leads one from oneself, and then the “governance transforms into torture, the judiciary – into the theft, the warrior host- into robbery, and science - into an instrument of evil”²¹. Therefore, according to H. Skovoroda, wealth, power and glory are not a condition for the achievement of happiness and

¹⁸ H. Skovoroda, *Rozмова, shho nazyvayetsya Alfavit, abo Bukvar myru* [A Conversation, Called Alphabet, or A Primer of the World], [in:] H. Skovoroda, *Piznaj v sobi ludynu* [Know yourself being man], Lviv, World, 1995, s. 308.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, s. 314.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, s. 310.

²¹ H. Skovoroda, *Rozмова, shho nazyvayetsya Alfavit, abo Bukvar myru* [A Conversation, Called Alphabet, or A Primer of the World], [in:] H. Skovoroda, *Piznaj v sobi ludynu* [Know yourself being man], Lviv, World, 1995, s. 315.

freedom, and hence, as we believe, is not also a means of existential rootedness of man.

In order to avoid the wrong ways, to know ones "affinity", it is necessary to take into account that proper inclinations are characterized by constancy, they are easily exercised and are useful for man. And if the proper activity is useful for the individual, then it becomes useful also for the society, because it leads to concerted, harmonious activity. Violation of the law of affinity leads to disastrous social consequences such as: lack of freedom, injustice, slavery and evil. In addition, the higher the social position, which is occupied by a person, the more harmful will be the impact of non-native activities.

Apart from pursuit of wealth and glory, the signs of deviation from nature, according to H. Skovoroda, are the lack of moral satisfaction from the process of activity, depressed state of the soul: "...Without nature, labor can not be sweet at all. True heart pleasure is contained in proper work. ...Sufficiency only satisfies the body, but the soul is amused with proper work"²².

Nonaffinity, inappropriateness of nature, the desire to go against it, be higher, go beyond its limits, according to the thinker, give rise to hypocrisy, hatred and transform each good action into the opposite. Nonaffinity "destroys and corrupts any occupation", leads to the loss of "cardiac merriment", "kills science and art", disgrace "priesthood and monastic orders"²³. That is, "affinity of labor" is considered by H. Skovoroda as the most important value and charity. In the context of our study, the violation of the law of affinity leads to deracination and personal destruction.

The concept of "proper work" also involves the principle of "unequal equality", which the philosopher contrasts with the principle of "equal equality" proclaimed by the French Enlighteners. "And what can be worse than equal equality, which fools attempt in vain to introduce in the world?" – the thinker asks²⁴. H. Skovoroda explains his understanding of equality, likening God to a fountain, which fills different vessels in volume: "Different jets outstream from different pipes in different vessels, located around the fountain. The smaller vessel has less, but it is equal to the larger

²² *Ibid.*, ss. 319-320.

²³ *Ibid.*, s. 333.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, s. 324.

since it is equally filled”²⁵. Thus, equality means not only the social valuation of wealth and wealth, but also the harmony of man with the world and with oneself.

While substantiating the main propositions of the concept of “affinity of labor”, H. Skovoroda reveals both nature and functions of needs, and satisfying them one asserts oneself in the world, ensures one’s existence and obtains spiritual and moral satisfaction. According to H. Skovoroda, a need, or a “necessity”, is the well-being and without obtaining it, one loses the opportunity to live gracefully, is doomed to suffering, they are the need of people in food, clothes, health, rest and, of course, in “affinity of labor”.

When contemporary philosophers consider the need to be the unity of natural and social factors, H. Skovoroda sees exclusively naturalness in a need. Moreover, the main criterion for determining the primacy of a particular need is the “ease” or “difficulty” of its satisfaction. “Blessed is the one who does what is needed to be easy, but the difficult to be of no use”, writes H. Skovoroda, developing the idea of Epicurus about true, natural and unnatural, fictitious needs and problems²⁶.

Such a view of the issue of needs brings the philosopher to one of the most important conclusions of the concept of “affinity”: natural, “proper” labor is both a need for the body and a need for the spirit, because it brings pleasure and delight; the natural “affinity” inspires the search for worthy ways and means of satisfying needs. The best among other ways and means of vital rootedness of man is “affinity of labor”, which brings a person pleasure not only by the results, but also by the process of activity itself. Describing such labor, H. Skovoroda uses the words “fun”, “holiday”, because “affinity of labor” is not only physical effort, but also the activity of spirit and thought, the path of knowledge.

Thus, “affinity of labor” is a process of spiritual and practical learning of the world, which, according to S. Krymskyi, “acts as a spiritual activity, proceeding from the algorithms of practical action”²⁷. It is human labor,

²⁵ H. Skovoroda, *Rozмова, shho nazyvayetsya Alfavit, abo Bukvar myru* [A Conversation, Called Alphabet, or A Primer of the World], [in:] H. Skovoroda, *Piznaj v sobi ludynu* [Know yourself being man], Lviv, World, 1995, s. 324.

²⁶ H. Skovoroda, *Borotba Arxystratyga Myxayila iz Satanoyu pro te: legko buty dobrym* [Fighting of Archangel Michael with Satan about the following: it is easy to be good], [in:] H. Skovoroda, *Piznaj v sobi ludynu* [Know yourself being man], Lviv, World, 1995, s. 409.

²⁷ S. Krymskij, *Filosofiya kak put chelovechnosti i nadezhdy* [Philosophy as a way of humanity and hope], Kyiv, Course, 2000, s. 72.

which carries positive, constructive forces that help man to gain the essential powers and to implement them, the labor in which the affinity of man with all existing is affirmed”, and, at the same time, strengthens individuality, uniqueness, freedom and moral sovereignty of the individual. Thus, according to H. Skovoroda, “proper labor” is not a means, but a purpose and meaning of life.

However, in our opinion, there are some contradictions in the concept of “affinity” of H. Skovoroda. Focusing on the absolute dependence of self-determination of man from natural inclinations, the philosopher actually denies the activity of the subject, the freedom of the will of man in the choice of life path, since it is only necessary to follow an invisible nature, obeying fate and finding pleasure in the fact that true happiness is in the person oneself, in the heart, but the outside world is a vanity. Thus, H. Skovoroda does not take into account the social nature of human needs, does not involve the possibility of mismatching the natural inclinations and social conditions for their development.

Applying analogies with nature, where one tree can only be either oak or birch, but can not be an oak and a birch at the same time, to the world of people the philosopher believes that a person can perform only one role, having only one “affinity”. The issue of the human's need for diverse, multi-faceted activities, and, consequently, the need for a comprehensive free development of the individual, can not be resolved. By limiting human needs to the most necessary ones, H. Skovoroda does not allow the development of human horizons. Denying self-identification through the wealth of material practice, the philosopher comes to asceticism, where not a real living person is the subject of freedom, but one's spiritual essence. Therefore, according to H. Skovoroda, the path to a harmonious society must take place not so much through the full development of the individual, of one's physical and spiritual needs, but through self-restraint and minimization of needs. As we see, Skovoroda does not give proposals how to build a just, perfect society, but emphasizes the loss of values and the fundamental change in human needs, the unjustified increase of the latter.

It is possible that these aspects of the concept of “affinity” are due to the original life experience of the philosopher who did not have his own home, his family, who lived at the expense of promoters, being satisfied with the minimum, thus becoming rooted exclusively in the field of spirituality and affined work. Thereby H. Skovoroda believes that the growth of needs and

desires leads to the impossibility of their fulfilling, and therefore, man loses balance and freedom. And only a return to the inalienable “affinity” of labor can lead the man to reconciliation of desires and their satisfaction, to enjoying the process of work. Thus, H. Skovoroda considers labor not from the point of view of economic results, but from the point of view of moral consequences.

This is human orientation where the “pre-personalism” of H. Skovoroda (O. Kultchytskyi) is manifested, his confidence in the fact that the path to human happiness is provided by moral self-improvement in the process of continuous creation of man by himself. That is, the very existence of the human person serves as a moral act, justified in the concept of “affinity of labor”, which, in our opinion, is one of the spiritual and practical ways of existential rooting. In general, the philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda correlates with the content of the author's concept of the existential rootedness of man by the coherence of the leading Ukrainian life purpose values, namely: spiritual sovereignty, affinity, responsibility, freedom, humanity, as such ontological foundations of existency, beyond which man finds himself in the toils of spiritual and practical involution. The same philosophy represents itself as life's wisdom, as “life in truth”, can be the expression of an antithetical interaction of the existential absolute capacity of man to be rooted and to his personal realization as freedom and responsibility.

Conclusions

Taking into account the foregoing, we can estimate the anthropological-existential conception of the “affinity of labor” by H. Skovoroda as a way of creating “culture of yourself” and “being-for-yourself” as a spiritual and practical way of existential rootedness of man the moral values and feelings of whom are central. In general, the philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda defines a certain semantic horizon that has brought us closer to creating our own concept of the existential rootedness of man, being essentially one of its protoconceptions.