

EDUCATION OF COEXISTENCE AS *TECHNĒ TOU BIOU*

Tomas Kačerauskas

Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Department of Philosophy and Political Theory,
Saulėtekio al. 11, LT-10223 Vilnius, Lithuania
E-mail: Tomas.Kacerauskas@vgtu.lt

The article deals with education of coexistence as training of life art (*technē tou biou*). The major thesis is the following: our existence has been educated in the life environment together with other agents of life world (*Lebenswelt*), while the latter are educated in the background of our existential project to be realized during our life. This major thesis presupposes the minor ones developed in the article: existential education means the change of the roles between the agents of life environment; existential education covers an ironic relationship between the teacher and a disciple; the teacher educates an unique combination of the disciple's characteristics to be nourished in his (her) existential perspective instead of forcing the equal way for everybody; every community has been educated while an individual changes life environment by realization of his (her) existential utopia; education is a kind of existential tradition's transfer through the new communicative channels; philosophy of education based on existential phenomenology stresses the aspects of responsible coexistence in the life-world to be created; education is the training of our life's art as responsible creation inseparable from becoming of life-world as the environment of our coexistence; education deals with a miracle of breaking educational circle while a disciple excels the teacher and changes the educational environment. By analysing the problems of existential education the author uses the approaches of both existential phenomenology and cultural regionalistics.

Keywords: existential education, life art, ironic approach, phenomenon of miracle.

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Introduction

Education deals with coexistence in a twofold sense. Firstly, the very education is certain coexistence, while the disciples supervised by a teacher are looking for the answers to the existential questions. The teaching material is only the pretext and background of these questions that emerged for every individual. Here we have a paradox: the answers to the individual existential questions are searched in the space of a community. Secondly, a teacher educates on coexistential attitude even if teaching material does not deal with humanities or social sciences. Actually, namely the technological sciences are most socialized therefore need

that kind of education. Following Heidegger's (2000) ethimological interpretation of technology and Husserl's (1952) phenomenological interpretation of environment (*Umwelt*) we can say that technology presupposes a kind of life art (*technē tou biou*), while *technē* is inseparable from skills as well knowing (Socrates) and *logos* – from spiritual environment as educational background.

The figure of Socrates is important here because of his *paidea*¹ project that covers his inter-

¹ I appeal to W. Jäger (1936).

est in knowing of *aretē* and in virtuous life art². Socrates' educational aspirations could be called ironic ones: his statement „I know that I don't know anything“ has been directed both to his interlocutors (actors of his dialectics) and the audience (including all readers of the Plato's or Xenophon's dialogues). The contradiction how to teach something without knowing anything could be solved only from ironic perspective. Herewith irony is an important component of life art's education that directs to the individual spiritual training instead of public engagement. In this sense Socrates' ignorance is justifiable: he could not know about individual life project of a disciple³. Here we have another contradiction, namely paradox of coexistence as *technē tou biou*. Coexistence like Socrates' way of philosophising is the public one while life art is individual one following from personal existential project.

Coexistence (*Mitsein*) refers to Heidegger's (1993) existential phenomenology, where we have another paradox: an individual being towards death (*Sein zum Tode*) as such has been constituted as being in the world (*Insein*) and being with other participants of existence (*Mitsein*). In other words, *our existence has been educated in the life environment together with other agents of life-world (Lebenswelt), while the latter are educated in the background of our existential project to be realized during our life*. This major thesis of the article presupposes the minor ones. Firstly, *existential education means the change of the roles between the agents of life environment*. Secondly, *existential education covers an ironic relationship between the teacher and a disciple*. Thirdly, *the teacher educates a unique combination of the disciple's characteristics to be nourished in his (her) existential perspective*

instead of forcing the equal way for everybody. Fourthly, *every community has been educated while an individual changes life-environment by realization of his (her) existential utopia*. Fifthly, *education is a kind of existential tradition's transfer through the new communicative channels*.

The education of coexistence as *technē tou biou* refers to the postmodern education⁴ not only because of communicative aspects but also because of ironic approach that presupposes the plurality of the existential regions. However, the aim of the article is not to develop the postmodern discourse, as well not to interpret the education in the perspective of postmodern thinking. Rather the aim is to develop cultural regionalistics while culture has been understood as existential creation and region has been treated first of all as a space of spiritual environment of certain nation in its historical perspective. That is why this and other researchers in cultural regionalistics are supported by the examples from certain cultural environment developed while an individual and his (her) community interact.

Thus, the mentioned theses will be developed using approaches of existential phenomenology and cultural regionalistics. The latter is also a way of thinking to be trained with the help of the first one. Existential phenomenology buried many times is alive as much as it could be developed, i.e. it changes its forms by transferring to other existential regions. In this way first of all I shall present M. A. Ozmon's and S. M. Crower's definition of existential education, later I shall analyse education in the perspective of coexistence, as well the role of creativeness and responsibility in existential education, and finally, I shall speak about an imagined region, training of life art and moral region as life-environment.

Existential education

According to Ozmon and Crower, existential-phenomenological approach presupposes the

² See Nehamas (2000).

³ By criticizing Socrates' moral approach from his perspectivist viewing Nietzsche overlooked the most important component of Socrates' teaching, namely ironic perspective. The ignorance of this inconspicuous nuance made Socrates an enemy instead of an ally for Nietzsche in ironical way.

⁴ See (Usher *et al.* 1996) and Duoblienė (2006).

openness to the world for both the teacher and a disciple (Ozmon *et al.* 1996: 319). The openness to the world is inseparable from our intentionality towards the life world. In education we have a more complicated picture: intentionality of the teacher towards a disciple is a part of his relationship with life environment, while a disciple treats teacher's world as life-world to be reached. Namely, the teacher helps to discover this unknown earth that should be connected with the individual existential region. The teacher is like a stalker⁵ who transfers a disciple through the extremely dangerous zone. The paradox is that for the teacher this zone is also unknown because of the unique way of every disciple. Another paradox: while a disciple connects with the transferred by the teacher region the latter extends his existential region, too⁶.

Education deals not only with transferring of certain tradition but also with creation of a novelty. On the other hand, transferring of the tradition refers to the past of a community⁷, conscious belonging to which forms the identity of a disciple who creates its future. Thus the teacher is also responsible for the creation of an environment that stimulates understanding of interconnection between the past and the future. Historicity is an aspect of education that refers to the individual educated in his (her) community's historical becoming. Every presence has been under the influence of the past having as well the opportunities of the future. While a disciple sees the past of his community only in the perspective of his (her) existential project educated by the teacher, the past of our community has been created by our future⁸.

This historical openness of our environment is an aspect of educational creativeness constitutional to both the teacher and a disciple.

A historical community is open for an individual as much as he (she) assumes responsibility for its future. Education of freedom has been directed to the individual creativeness within a community. Creativeness and temporality are inseparable not only because of historicity of a community that needs the heroes, but also because of being towards death, the closeness of which makes an individual and his community⁹ analogous. That is why existential education is impossible for appealing to global immortal human kind instead of certain local temporal community as an environment of a mortal hero. In this way the source of morality (responsibility) is an existential region matured in a community's historical environment co-created by the mortal individuals¹⁰. Therefore, the tragic side of life to be stressed by the teacher emerges in the perspective of community's historical development instead of the perspective of human wholeness. Every social wholeness is open i.e. serves existential education in so far it is analogous to the individual while being temporal. Analogy is not as much similarity as interconnection while openness of the community means changeability under the influence of individual existential creation. The educated freedom inseparable from his (her) responsibility appeals to existential region where the individual utopia and history of open community intersect.

According to Donald Vandenburg (1971), an individual "landscape" should be connected with "geography" of certain study-programme providing power and direction to individual originality. Existential geography refers to cultural regionalistics that deals with the historical maps of certain community while culture has

⁵ Comp. Tarkovsky's (1979) *Stalker*.

⁶ V. Flusser speaks about inversion of the 2nd thermodynamical law in communication when the sum of the information increases by transferring (Flusser 2007: 247–248). As mentioned, education could be treated as a kind of communication.

⁷ Not necessary nation.

⁸ This thesis has been developed elsewhere (Kačerauskas 2008).

⁹ More about the existential-phenomenological interpretation of the death see (Kačerauskas 2009).

¹⁰ It is an inversion of Kant's (1987) morality that appeals to all rational beings around the world.

been treated here as existential creation. The phenomena of this landscape are the factors of both the existential education and community's becoming. I would like both to interpret the mentioned principles of existential-phenomenological education and to extend them into the perspective of coexistence to be educated as a certain life's art. In this way my key words will be responsibility, creativeness, historical imagination, tragic heroics, freedom, coexistence, and moral region.

My thesis to be developed here is the following: *philosophy of education based on existential phenomenology stresses the aspects of responsible co-existence in the life-world to be created*. What does it mean? On the one hand, it means education of certain life's art that corresponds to Socrates and Seneca¹¹. Socrates used a teaching method called art of birth. Birth corresponds here to renewing of both individual approach and existential environment challenged by every individual motion. Thus the existential heroics emerges as ability to change our spiritual environment. In other words, an existential region becomes a source of social renewing. Irony plays here a special role. Firstly, irony like phenomenological *epochē* suspends knowing of a participant of dialogue in order to reach together the place of *aretē*, even if it is a utopian region without *topos*. Actually, only utopian region to be reached presupposes common replace of existential *topos*, i.e. coexistence. Secondly, irony is a linguistic trope to be recognized. This recognition refers to a community that transgress the borders both of generations and nations. Rephrasing Lingis (1997) it is a community of those who have nothing in common, i.e. the utopian one, too. The teacher using irony tries to engage a disciple in this community, belonging to which demands creative existence as an exit to other (utopian) place for both the teacher and a disci-

ple while they meet other historical participants of irony. Therefore this community could be called ironic one not only because it deals with irony but also because of utopian character that presupposes namely coexistence. Belonging to the ironic community does not exclude the existential region of an individual, conversely, it ensures his (her) constant movement to a new life environment that opens the horizon of very existential *topos*. In other words, it presupposes existential education.

Seneca stresses the mutual obliged relationship between a teacher-writer and a pupil-interpreter (Seneca 1986). The letters instead of oral dialectics miss alive communication in the process of education, however writing presupposes new communication as a kinship crossing the times' borders thanks to our historical imagination. Even Socrates' ironic community is available thanks to Plato's and Xenophon's written dialogues open to our interpretation. Additionally, writing could be interpreted as an inscription into our cultural "landscape" opening new viewing. Writing has been recognized as a phenomenon of our spiritual geography that has been changed by these inscriptions that appeal to the towers, churches and streets in our life route. We are travelling to our existential region according to these inscriptions to be enciphered as markers of our existential movement in certain life environment.

In addition to that, writing to be interpreted means continual creation of our being in the common life-world inseparable from historical imagination. Education as a kind of communication presupposes not only two sides of communicative chain, i.e. the teacher and a disciple. The teacher appealing to nation's history represents other generations, the utopia of which finds place (*topos*) in our spiritual life-world to be opened to a disciple. In this way the disciple becomes an impulse to open certain historical image to be always connected with our expectations, i.e. with a utopia. A disciple is the utopian one in a twofold sense: he is to be realized as a part of our historical environment and he is to be educated as a hero while renewing this

¹¹ Instead of life's style to be developed in the consumer society where even the historical images have been multiplied in order to be consumed.

environment. In this way we should understand Socrates' utterance "I know that I don't know anything": the disciple emerges not only as a chain connected with our historical "geography" and not only as a factor of teacher's replacing to another "landscape" (*topos*), but also as a link of ironic community. In other words, a disciple inspired by his (her) teacher ensures the communicative content of education.

One could say that ironic community transgressing the borders of the historical (e.g. national) communities is the global one and thus we return to Kant's idea of universal moral region. It is not the case because of two things. Firstly, the ironic community appeals also to a certain locality because of its existential code to be enciphered. Secondly, we deal with existential region that is always between two "geographies" – the vertical one and horizontal one. Vertical "geography" refers to ironic community and its region, while the horizontal one appeals to historical community. Therefore existential education opens two directions of communication within different communities. Family could be treated also as a historical community beside nation. Family as the least historical community is the environment of both education and communication. This wideness of family's region follows from its individual character what presupposes the training of *technē tou biou*.

The community of the teacher and a disciple functions namely as a family¹², which could be treated both as a social unit and an individual with his (her) existential region. Family is a place for mutual education while both the parents and the children mature in the perspective of a utopia. The latter refers not only to creative future but also to imagined past, as well to transferred tradition and emerged novelty. The mutual motion of family's members is possible in a spacious enough house, what is the region without place (utopia). The mutual motion in

a family corresponds not only to aesthetics of educated life's art (creativity, imagination), but also to teaching ethics. The latter covers both responsibility of the teacher for disciple's intellectual motions, which should be directed, and respect of the disciple towards the teacher, who directs him through unknown landscape. However, responsibility and respect have changed their roles during education while a disciple feels response to the teacher's success regarding him and the teacher feels respect-while he shares ignorance with his student as an aspect of utopia.

Creativeness and responsibility in an imagined region

In this way the very process of teaching is a model of coexistence to be taught. As mentioned, coexistence covers as well relationship with historical generations in order to ground a new imagined community during every interpretation. This community is the ironic one because of some reasons. First of all it is an imagined community without any "real" place, to be precise without any "real" borders while it transgresses the borders of other social regions. The irony concerns here the very notion of "reality" while the mentioned utopian community could be more influenced than other "real" communities¹³. Beside this, the participants of this community deal with irony as a code to be recognized within it. In this way it is a hermeneutic mean for an individual to understand his (her) identity that has been formed by intersecting of different communities' borders. Finally, irony demands creative activity characteristic to both the teacher and a disciple while educational process includes other participants of ironic community. In this sense both the teacher and a disciple form their identity in Socrates' face.

¹² Not accidentally Plato's academy had been organized as a family, the participants of which not only learned together but also ate and slept, in other words, lived together.

¹³ More about reality in the perspective of human creation see (Kačerauskas 2008).

Being in somebody's face presupposes the responsible coexistence¹⁴. Every participant of such meeting face-to-face within the ironic community responds to the other participants by forming his (her) identity. It is the most alive communication in a gymnasium of an ancient Greek pole despite the fact that we communicate thanks to the inscriptions in a cultural region to be created by us. Beside this, we are responsible being in face of our descendants while we transfer our existential maps to them. Thus our descendants also play the role of our teachers who extend the borders of ironic region. At the same time the role of ironic community's predecessors has been changed by emerging of every new child in this family. The same could be said about emerging of a new family when a member of ironic family marries a member of a historical family entering the new social horizon. Every education is such a marriage while the new creative horizon opens for a disciple who changes his (her) role with the teacher. On the other side, the marriage is a school of responsibility for the future children, i.e. for our utopia. In other words, we are responsible for our existential creation to be interpreted by future participants of communities we shall belong to. Actually, we shall decide on full responsibility concerning belonging to a certain community only after our death when existential creation educated by us will contribute to constituting of these communities. Therefore even after we remain our creations in role of the orphans we are still responsible for this work of education. Here lies the biggest irony that enables our belonging to both ironic community and the historical communities, which constitute the content of our cultural regionalistics' map. The cultural region is also an existential region as far as culture is existential creation.

However, the very entry to a certain community (even after the death in ironic way) is possible thanks to educational connection

between the teacher and a disciple, i.e. thanks to ironic relation, which both keeps in a closed community and transfers to other cultural *topos* enlarging our life's space. Cultural communication is possible due to belonging to one community despite the temporal and spatial borders. This ironic community for hermeneutic existence does not exclude other communities, knock of which is an individual searching for his identity in these cultural channels. As a result, the very education could be treated as training of co-existence in searching for identity. We can speak about both individual and social identities that intersect each other, i.e. take part in mutual education while changing their roles.

This intersection supposes our life-world as a region of both the imagined future and historical events to be interpreted in the perspective of this imagination. Therefore we are educated as the responsible members of our imagined communities¹⁵. Our ironic community as the imagined one is no less real and demands no less our responsibility. Contrarily, being the factors of our becoming these communities are real phenomena that enable existence as permanent existent in a new hermeneutic region.

Phenomenon of miracle in training of life's art

Thus *the education is training of our life's art as responsible creation inseparable from becoming of life-world as the environment of our coexistence*. In other words, it is existential creation in a life-environment that emerges as the second plan while we are playing our heroic role within the imagined communities as the schools of responsibility. We have our role of first plan not by accident, but rather in a miracle way while the perspectives of the communities (where we take place by searching for our identity) intersect.

¹⁴ Comp. Levinas (1984).

¹⁵ Comp. Anderson (1999), who uses this term speaking about the nations. I prefer to enlarge the borders of the imagined community that covers also the ironic community.

As mentioned, this role in an ironic way could be provided for us after our death thanks to the alive works educated by us. They are alive because of their active role in forming certain communities as educational environments. This activity is the other side of our responsibility that emerges in the light of our death.

Now consider both the life story and history of a saint who has played his role in our region. In general, the number of the saints, who are usually distributed to the national communities, is an indicator of certain community's political weight¹⁶ that emerges in Christian community. The latter could be called community of the saints¹⁷. Here we have a circle relationship between the communities instead of the linear one that presupposes certain intersections: the saints as the members of the saints' community distribute the saints to other communities. In other words, the saints have been educated in the circle of the saints. The biggest miracle is not the one (or three) that is demonstrated by a dead saint¹⁸. The biggest miracle is breaking the mentioned communicative and hermeneutic circle that serves as educational environment. Thus *education deals with a miracle of breaking educational circle while a disciple excels the teacher and changes the educational environment*.

Back to our saint. It is saint Andrew Bobola who had lived in a country far from saints' region¹⁹. In addition to that, he was no way an

upstart from his environment. Contrarily, he had been undistinguished child of his undistinguished educational environment. This could be said about both his studies in the new at that time Vilnius University and his monk's life after the studies. Even his martyrdom during the war with Russia²⁰ was "usual": there were hundreds of cases of the martyrdom for the belonging to the catholic community at that time. That is why Bobola had been forgotten for two hundred years. Actually, Bobola's activity had started after his death, i.e. in time when his life story became the actual one because of educational reason. First Bobola's miracle was his declaration about his engagement in creation of a new community, i.e. the national one²¹. In Bobola's time the idea of national community was very different: firstly, it was a community of the noblemen, secondly, it had been connected not as far with national language as with religion²². The miracle was that Bobola after his death emerged in a very new role, i.e. as factor of new community. In other words, his life story educated the new generations in realizing of their utopia. Bobola was "remembered" by an agent of the mentioned new community to be created, in his dream. It appeals to Plato's ideas to be remembered: the idea should be remembered in an active (creative) way while they play the role of renewing our life environment. The miracle is Bobola's exit from his life circle into a new hermeneutic and existential environment, the factor of which creation he has become.

While the first Bobola's miracle appeals to cultural novelty, the second one deals with tradition to be conserved, i.e. with his heroic

¹⁶ It could be an important factor of ratings of such community as the university.

¹⁷ Comp. S. Rapolionis' thesis "The church is a community of the saints, the main marks of which are the true word and appropriate offering of the sacraments" (Lukšaitė 1999: 208).

¹⁸ Every scientist lives in an Alice's Wonderland while he (she) encounters the phenomena, which contradict to his (her) theory. Thus the miracles are usual in scientific world.

¹⁹ Saint Kazimieras (Casimir) as the patron of Lithuania is rather an exception. Firstly, every country has right at least to one saint for the sake of communication with saints' community. Secondly, saint Kazimieras (Casimir) belonged as well to the kings' community that is not so far from saints' world.

²⁰ 1655–1661.

²¹ According to a witness, who saw Bobola in 1812, he spoke about future free Poland.

²² The fight for certain religion having the form of the fight between different nations (Russian one and Lithuanian-Polish one) defined the borders not only between future states but also between two regions, i.e. between Central Europe and East Europe. This border is such deep that it was not erased during the decades of Soviet community's existence.

resistance to time's influence. I mean his resistance to the decay of his body. This essential passivity like the mentioned activity emerges also during the hundreds of years after his death. The circumstances of this emerging are not accidental, too. This Bobola's miracle has been demonstrated by the Bolsheviks in an ironic way. The Bolsheviks as the agents of cardinal novelty intended to show that the adored tradition is totally decayed. They hoped for the scandal analogous to one described by Dostojevski in his *Brathers Karamazov* where the body of the elder Zosima began to decay in some days after his death²³. However the Bolsheviks initiated the other kind of scandal by showing publicly that the body of saint Bobola has been not decayed²⁴. The irony lies also in the fact that such social revolutionists as the Bolsheviks stayed the scientific dogmatists even in the face of a miracle that had to break their conception. The Bolsheviks stayed steadfast in this sense while they had been educated by the scientific dogmas.

The third Bobola's miracle proceeds in the other plan, i.e. in hermeneutical-educational one. My thesis: our *technē tou biou* has been educated by the miracles. In other words, we constantly need a shock to improve our life art. The aspect of the shock is the scandal as a public miracle that breaks our attitudes towards our being in the world. On the other hand, the influence of a miracle is very individual while

it changes our life art. In other words, the approach to every community (including the saints' one) where we realize our existential strategy is very individual. Bobola's third miracle appeals to our individual way of coexistence to be always in search.

Instead of conclusion: the moral region

Education covers the studies of nation's history for future coexistence between other nations in a region called life-world that includes historical and political aspects of social environment. The latter develops while different historical communities intersect each other rotating across an individual, which coexists being educated in an ironic way. In this sense education is revealing of a certain region as environment of our moral life to be created. Moral region serves as a hermeneutic channel for our letters sent in order to find an identity after interpreting them in a certain community. In this way both our identity to be created and history of a community to be remembered are the utopian ones due to educational character of our coexistence.

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²³ The scandal followed from the saint community of the elders, who had to behave accordingly both until and after their death. The elder Zosima behaved scandalous while his body began to decay after his death as he betrayed his community of the saints breaking the tradition. About this behaviour of an elder see (Достоевский 1998).

²⁴ This application for immortality could be interpreted in twofold ways. Firstly, it refers to unmoved and unchangeable world of the tradition (e.g. Catholic one). Secondly, it appeals to the constant tactical changes (as well education) in the frame of our existential strategy. I prefer the second interpretation. The Bobola's behaviour after his death (immortality) is inseparable from our existential aspirations, in the light of which proceed his miracles.

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SAMBŪVIO UGDYMAS KAIP TECHNĖ TŪ BIŪ

Tomas Kačerauskas

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas sambūvio ugdymas kaip gyvenimo būdo (*technė tou biou*) lavinimas. Iškeliama didžioji tezė: mūsų egzistencija ugdoma gyvenimo aplinkoje drauge su kitais gyvenamojo pasaulio (*Lebenswelt*) agentais, kurie lavinami įgyvendintino mūsų gyvenimu egzistencinio projekto fone. Ši didžioji tezė suponuoja mažąsias: egzistencinis ugdymas reiškia vaidmenų tarp gyvenimo aplinkos agentų pasikeitimą; egzistencinis ugdymas apima ironišką santykį tarp mokytojo ir mokinio; mokytojas ugdo unikalią mokinio bruožų, puoselėtinų jo (jos) egzistencinėje perspektyvoje, kombinaciją vietoj vienodo kelio kiekvienam forsavimo; kiekviena bendrija ugdoma, individui keičiant gyvenimo aplinką, jam įgyvendinant savo egzistencinę utopiją; ugdymas yra egzistencinės tradicijos perdavimo naujais komunikacijos kanalais būdas; egzistencinė fenomenologija paremta ugdymo filosofija pabrėžia atsakingo sambūvio sukurtiname gyvenamajame pasaulyje aspektus; ugdymas yra mūsų gyvenimo būdo kaip atsakingos kūrybos, neatsiejamos nuo tapimo gyvenamajame pasaulyje kaip mūsų sambūvio aplinkoje, lavinimas. Ugdymas turi reikalą su stebuklu kaip lavinimo rato sulaužymu, mokiniui pranokstant mokytoją ir keičiant ugdymo aplinką. Nagrinėjant egzistencinio ugdymo problemas pasitelkiama tiek egzistencinės fenomenologijos, tiek kultūrinės regionalistikos priegos.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: egzistencinis ugdymas, gyvenimo būdas, ironiškas požiūris, stebuklo fenomenas.

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