Discourse of Globalization: *Bios*, *Technē*, and *Logos* 
from the Phenomenological Point of View

**Abstract**

*This paper conducts an etymological investigation of the key words of globalization – bios, technē and logos. In addition to this, these keyword concepts are interpreted in the context of existential phenomenology. For this purpose not only Heidegger, who is a proponent of the existential interpretation of ancient concepts, but also Husserl, Gadamer, Lévinas, and Bakhtin are invoked. There are three theses presented in the paper: 1) our body is inseparable from the spiritual environment, where it matures by gaining the spiritual functions of being spiritualized, named and realised; 2) the spiritual environment is at the same time technological, where technē is to be interpreted as an art of creation of environment’s interactive component such as the body and the spirit; 3) logos as the word and the name presupposes a text, i.e. a book written by our lives and the context, i.e. the interaction of texts as life-stories. The argument is given for the analogous interpretation of bios, technē and logos, i.e. that the three should be interpreted as interactive components of existential creation, which involve different planes of relationships between the spiritual environment and the life-story developing in it. Bios is related to the corporal aspect of existential creation; our life from birth to death is inseparable from the corporal temporal-spatial whole, which is involved in the spiritual environment. Logos reflects the linguistic-scriptural nature of the spiritual context of the environment. Technē is interpreted both as an art of creation of the existential whole and as an art of its inscription into this context. As a result, bios, technē and logos are interpreted in a way alternative to the discourse of globalization.*

**Key words** 
globalization, bios, technē, logos, existential phenomenology

**Introduction**

*Bios, technē and logos* are the key words of the discourse of globalization. The connotations of *bios, technē and logos* are imbued with particular phenomena of the contemporary living world, the relation between the human body and the environment, or our living whole which is influenced by technological thinking, whereby the body’s environment refers also to various prostheses of the body and body-substituting robots. The questions posed thereby are: how the role of our body in this environment, transfused by simulacra, has changed; whether the body can function and whether we can exist without technological support; and finally, whether we can meditate the body separated from the machines, which surround us? These questions pertain to the interconnections between the body and one’s environment on different levels, to the interaction between parts of the living world in the process of life and thereby also environment creation.

Furthermore, we are global players also in the sense that our thinking depends on the culture developed many ages ago. Our language (*logos*), philosophical
one in particular, has developed from ancient concepts, which is why meanings and connotations of the ancient concepts of *bios*, *technē* and *logos* are analyzed in this paper. In this sense the correspondence with the aspirations of the biggest authority in existential phenomenology, Heidegger, can be noted. As it is known, Heidegger paid special attention to the etymology of the notions and to their ancient connotations. For instance, when analysing the issue of technology he uses etymologic investigations of the concept *technē*: thinking is listening to the senses that had layered in the language, while these senses were formed in a particular existential environment. Language and existence are analogous as they interact by participating in the becoming of the environment and us within it.

Every interpretation arises from the crossing of our theoretical and practical attitudes. However, this refers not so much to a conflict of interpretations as to the interaction of different planes of the living environment (scholastic and existential). It presupposes the mobility and openness of the environment that is spiritualised by us: it increases together with our emergence in the background, which consists of the cultural silts transfused by language. Culture is the cultivation of these silts, while we keep nourishing and renovating them in the perspective of our existential creation. That is why the interpretation offered in this paper is based on the phenomenology of creation: we create our existential project which we expand under the influence of phenomena as a part of the multi-layered living whole. In this sense, while projecting our objectives into the future, we are always simultaneously directed to the past, which lets us expand the existential whole.

I do not think the arguments that the existential philosophy is dead are serious: philosophy as the love of wisdom cannot ignore life, i.e. philosophy meditates existence *par excellence*. Thus, the focus on etymology does not let philosophy disregard existential creation, which is enabled by the interaction between wisdom and love. The attention paid to etymology will therefore accompany the considerations given below. We shall see where the analogical interpretation of ‘life’ (*bios*), ‘technology’ (*technē*) and ‘language’ (*logos*) will lead us. The analogy (*ana ton logon*) presupposes the interaction of all three components in the existential whole, transfused by language. The ‘whole’ or *sōs* (entire) is etymologically connected to *sōma* (the body). This analysis will be given posterior to Heidegger’s and Habermas’ interpretations of technology.

Three main theses of the paper will be presented. The first thesis is that our body is inseparable from the spiritual environment, where it matures by gaining spiritual functions, of being spiritualized, named and realised. The devalued word “spiritual” is not used accidentally and *psychikos* is thereby kept in mind (*psychē* means the spirit, *psychō* means to breathe). Firstly, there are essential etymological connotations of the breath, which supports life, regarding the sensitive (corporal) plane. Secondly, expiration is connected with death, the end of existence; in other words, breath presupposes the possibility of being-towards-death. Thirdly, this concept is encouraged to use by Husserl (1952), who talked about the spiritual environment (*geistige Umwelt*). Therefore, the spirit as a whole consisting of convictions, attitudes, and objectives is not alien to the phenomenological tradition. It is a linguistic (*logos*) whole: this assumption deems interpretation to be a live existential narrative. This existential narrative ensues from not only Gadamer’s hermeneutical attitude that language is a medium of understanding but also the tension between the author and the hero, which was considered by Bakhtin.
The second thesis is that *spiritual environment is at the same time technological, where technē is to be interpreted as an art of creation of the environment’s interactive components (the body and the spirit)*. Existential creation, or life’s art, emerges as the tension between the spirit that is embodied (realised), and the body that is spiritualised (named). The latter aspect is included in the gravitational field of *logos*, which covers linguistic existence. *Logos* is both a word imposed to us and a name created by us. Therefore, technology is a life’s art which lets us embody our objectives and name our body in the whole of these objectives.

The third thesis is that *logos as both a word and a name presupposes the text, i.e. the book, which is written with the help of our life and the context, i.e. of interactions of texts as life-stories*. Herewith, it includes creative interaction between *sōma* (body) and *graphē* (script). Our body was inscribed into already cumulated spiritual environment, which grows because of the existential narrative which we turned away from.

Therefore, the task of this paper is to analyse the issue of globalization in an indirect way, i.e. to investigate such key words of globalization as *bios*, *technē* and *logos* both from the etymological and phenomenological point of view. The mentioned theses will be developed with mentions of Heidegger, Husserl, Bakhtin, Gadamer, Habermas, and Lévinas.

**Technology and technē**

Before interpreting the body as a factor of the living world, I will contrast the views of Habermas and Heidegger on technology (*Technik*). Although both authors pay a lot of attention to the etymology of the concepts, they come from different theoretical environments. The latter circumstance will later on help us not only develop the senses (meanings) of the concept technē, while they emerge in the forge of the thought’s fight, but also define the limits of the concepts.

Habermas interprets technology as a means of ruling and control, and technocratic consciousness as background ideology (*Hintergrundideologie*), which considers the science as a fetish. Ruling and control presuppose violence, which is realised in a democratic environment with the help of technology. That is why Habermas asks: “How could the violence of technological disposal emerge in the contracts of citizens, who are acting and negotiat-

It can thus be spoken of a triangle of technology (science), violence (ruling) and democracy (free market). Technology expresses not so much the abatement of work as the way to realize and to materialize authority. Technology helps produce the demand: reification is inseparable from the increase in consumption. Technology, which had delivered us from the former slave’s work, turned us into new slaves (due to a novelty production technology), or the slaves of technological consciousness.

Therefore, instead of being the creators we end up as consumers. Technology is not controlled by anybody; it is omnipresent in a tornado of reification, which robs us all of our creativity. This interpretation of Habermas’s considerations on technology allows us to compare him not only to Horkheimer and Adorno or Baudrillard (1990), but even to Heidegger. The technological thought of the Enlightenment immerses us into the water of das Man, where we are controlled by “fatal strategies”, which are controlled by nobody. It is an anonymous system of symbolic changes for Baudrillard, whereas Heidegger sees it as idle talk (das Gerede). It corresponds to the environment of the media, in which we have been formed by the ratings complex and are reified (verdinglicht) in that we become the conductors of the media by submitting to the “fatal strategies” of the consumption of things. Not accidentally, Habermas, when interpreting Hegel, speaks of people as reified by work.

Before moving to Heidegger’s conception of technology, I would like to distinguish between reification and objectification. As we have seen, reification is the submission to the “fatal strategies” and to the flow of idle talks. It expresses the lack of dialectical (according to Hegel and Plato) or polyphonic (according to Bakhtin) thinking. What is more, a reified environment supposes stagnation or, to be more precise, technological automatism. The environment, ourselves being the parts (not participants) of which, becomes a robot which produces our demand for things. Despite the fact that this robot works unflaggingly, it is dead. According to Baudrillard: we are not able (and we do not want) to change its process, because we are merely staff serving it, “human resources” for the system support. I wrote about objectification in a significantly different context, which tackles realisation, limitation and cultivation. Objectification of phenomena presupposes their involvement in the reality of our memory and objectives, while this reality as a whole in turn changes our environment. This whole, which I called ‘existential’ on the trace of Heidegger, gains its wholeness only in the face of our death. Therefore, the spiritual environment, influenced by our existential creation, was reborn as an analogous interaction of life narratives. In this sense, while being involved in the existential narratives of other spiritual participants of the environment, we also get objectified but not reified.

Let us get back to Heidegger. According to him, “the essence of technology is not technological at all.” By interpreting this utterance, we should pay respect to the fact that Heidegger’s investigation is etymological. In other words, Heidegger is concerned with the origin of the concept technē, to be more precise, the spiritual environment of its use in ancient (classical) times. The attention to the spiritual environment of Plato, who was criticized by Heidegger, makes us the interpreters (inter-preto) of that environment, participants, who are between (inter) two living environments that are connected by the whole of our objectives, purposes and memories (logos).

We act analogously with the artists (technē namely means art): we subordinate all handy (zuhandene, according Heidegger) phenomena to the whole of the novel to be created which is never infinite. On the one hand, we write our novels led by the phenomena inscribed into it. On the other hand, our novels
become components of a new interpretative whole by expanding the living reality. The analogy (ana ton logon) between novel and existence in respect to the living reality in creation enables us to speak about the existential novel, which is created in an open spiritual environment (logos). The interpretation of the ancient environment allows its inclusion into our living whole as its creative component which enriches our reality. The role of remembrance (anamnēsis) is creative: not only because it emerges from the interaction of theōria and existentia in creating the living reality, but also because it makes our existential environment infinite. Living-and-linguistic environment is expanding through components that are remembered and interpreted in the context of the environment created.17

That is why Heidegger states that “technē implies not only actions and skills of craftsmen, but also higher art and fine art. Technē belongs to up-lift (Hervor-bringen), poiēsis”.18 Heidegger relates the up-lift with revelation (Entbergen), unconcealment (alētheia), truth (veritas), which is to be understood as the directedness of representation (Richtigkeit des Vorstellens).19 I had analysed Heidegger’s conceptions of truth in another paper20 aimed at showing that truth emerges as a spiritual environment’s component, which directs our existential creation. We create truth a guide of our existential project together with the remembrances and the raised purposes inscribed in it, while they correct (Korrektur) the spiritual environment as well. The existential connotation of truth is confirmed by the emergence of such existential (Existential) as danger (Gefahr), while man uncovers (creates) his or her destiny (Geschick).21

8 Ibid., p. 114.
11 Rephrasing Bourdieu who talked about the thinking of ratings in Sur la télévision.
13 J. Baudrillard, L’échange symbolique et la mort.
16 Especially regarding the late period of his creation.
17 Habermas denotes that etymology of theoria has theological connotations: “theōros was called a delegate, which had been sent to public games in Greek poles” (J. Habermas, Technik und Wissenschaft als “Ideeologie”, p. 146), whereas the public games were a sacral process. Therefore, theōros like Hermes was between the divine reality and the human publicity. Remembrance for Plato is theoretical, because it supposes inborn divine ideas.
21 “[D]er Mensch [ist] aus dem Geschick her geführt. das Geschick der Entbergung ist als solches in jeder seiner Weisen und darum notwendig Gefahr.” Ibid., 27.
The danger is to be related to the infiniteness of the existential whole: a phenomenon having been inscribed is able to turn the whole. This covers both minor (story of life) and major existential whole (spiritual environment). As a result, their analogy emerges in an existential coupling, while we create our existential story, which has been inscribed into spiritual environment that was created by us.

What connects the interpretations of technology by Habermas and Heidegger? Are their discourses incommensurable? It seems that the concepts of technology by these two German philosophers are cardinaly opposite: it is the unification of thinking in the ideological background of demand-supply for Habermas. This background develops perfectly in the conditions of free market (capitalism), when the media serve the demand production, i.e. the reification of individuals. Technology expresses the conductance of media channels when every individual is subordinated to the fatal strategies of reification. According to this interpretation, technology guarantees anonymity (the strategies are without an author) of our living background, in which we become substances of demand production.

Heidegger also talks about the impersonal “their” (das Man) strategies but does not relate them with technē. Conversely, technē for him embodies a creative existence that develops in the spiritual environment and changes it. This is the creative principle of the interaction between a part and the whole, the author and the hero; a principle determined by our being-towards-death (Sein zum Tode). Herewith it expresses the interaction between corporeality (mortality and sensuality) and wholeness (incorporation in the spiritual whole). Therefore, technē, unlike technology, presents a principle of mastery and creativeness, the principle of creative existence, which transmutes both corporeal life and spiritual coming into being. Further etymological investigation will probably show both the interconnections and the tension between the body (sōma) as the whole (sōs) and spirit (logos) as an environment of its becoming.

The parallelism between technology as interpreted by Habermas, and “they” (das Man) as developed by Heidegger, does not let us conclude that their ways (technai) of philosophising are incommensurable. This is also confirmed by further investigations of Habermas, who appeals to Heidegger. However, the comparison of technology and technē shows the coverage of interpretational (spiritual) background (logos); the bigger it is the higher is the tension between the phenomena it was to interpret. In other words, our interpretational background is expanding due to a spiritual fight, which unfolds in it covering the tension between novelty and tradition. It does not mean that Heidegger’s thought, directed towards ancient spiritual tradition, expresses only archaeological intentions or that Habermas’s contemplation of newest social tendencies embodies only positive novelties. On the contrary, they would one without the other reduce the spiritual background as an environment of our existential creation. We fill this environment both with remembrances and expectations. All great postmodernists are famous interpreters of ancient heritage. Here ‘famous’ means able to exchange the tradition of spiritual environment with the help of creative intentions.

**Bios: body as a factor of the living world**

Let us get back to the question of body, which, as it was mentioned, is intertwined with the issues of wholeness and life. Despite the fact that our life
changes constantly, or maybe precisely because of this, it is a whole. Its mobility is inseparable from our creative objectives. On the one hand, we create our existential project, which covers the way of our thinking and action. On the other hand, we realize our objectives, which emerge in the background of the reality we experience. This presupposes sōs bios, the whole life or the whole of life, which we retrieve from formless “they” (das Man) element, while we harmonize its parts due to our work. Rephrasing Lévinas, with the help of work we create the intimate (i.e. harmonious in respect to our objectives and senses) home environment.

The work is realized by hands, which embody it in two ways: bodily contact (in a tactile way) and the involvement of the creation into the spiritual whole, which was renewed in this way as the environment of our creation. Not accidentally does Heidegger talk about handiness (Zuhandenheit): handy is what is to be cultivated in the whole of our remembrances and objectives. Cultivation refers to two aspects: the incorporation into existential whole created by us and the extraction from the formless anonymous element. According to Lévinas, “a hand delivers the things extracted from the element” due to work the movement of which is directed towards oneself. Anonymous element is faceless for Lévinas, i.e. there dominate impersonal relations purified from any bodily quality (tactility). Despite the fact that the erotic body is in the media spotlight (advertising, television, internet), it presents a standard no man’s body, anonymous and faceless, in other words, bodiless in both aforementioned senses. A mediated body is not to be extracted from the anonymous element and not to be involved into our spiritual environment, i.e. it is not to be cultivated in the existential whole named by us.

Every time we create a new whole of life by cultivating, that is to say by naming and embodying, new phenomena, we in that way make them the participants of this whole to be expanded by “their”. Realisation means the inscription of the phenomena into our life-story; it unfolds as interaction of different texts. While writing an existential novel by means of our work, we realize our identity, which does not coincide with the identity of the author in this creative interaction between noema and noesis (according to Husserl). The interaction between noema (thinkable thought) and noesis (thinking) is analogous to the interaction between activity (creativity) and passivity (bodily quality), in the process of our coming into being in our spiritual environment. Herewith, it expresses the recovery of the author’s whole from the formless and faceless element by means of work. In a corporal way (working with hands

22 Not accidentally, the beginnings (eidos) of concepts ideal and ideological are the same.

23 The role of media also plays the law, money and authority: “the law operates as the complex media, which is related with money and power”. Jürgen Habermas, Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns. Bd. 2. Kritik der funktionalistischen Vernunft, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 1995.

24 This interpretation is developed not only by Habermas and other Frankfurt school’s representatives (Horkheimer with Adorno, Marcuse), but also Baudrillard.

25 J. Habermas, Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns.

26 E. Lévinas, Totalité et Infini, p. 173.

27 “The primordial intention of work is (…) a motion towards oneself”, ibid., p. 173.

28 “The work is directed to that, what has no face”; ibid., p. 174.
and cultivating handy thoughts), we recover a living body as a whole in the logos environment, which changes under the influence of the becoming of wholeness, which is analogous to corporeality. Spiritual logos environment is alive (inspired) due to life texts created by us and inscribed (corporal) in it. This existential creation is alive due to the relationship between the text and the context, while it pulsates as the interaction between body and spirit. Existential analogy (of text and context, of body and spirit) here expresses mutual interaction of the logos environment: ana ton logon.

Therefore, we follow Bakhtin’s argument regarding the author and the hero of the life text, i.e. their creative interaction, when they constitute the living environment by formatting each other – that is the context of existential reality. This context lets us develop our living whole even after our death, when it grows together with objectives and senses created by new authors and heroes.

Therefore, the etymological analysis of the concepts bios, technē, logos, sōma, and graphē brings us to etymos i.e. to their real, authentic (eigentlich – Heidegger) sense. However, we gain understanding not by revealing ancient senses. Heidegger’s alētheia or unconcealment is to be connected with Da-sein, in other words, with the existential openness. We exist by existing (existus) towards death, i.e. by leaving the life text inscribed in the context of our spiritual environment (logos). Therefore, we gain realisation by involving the ancient thought into our logos, i.e. into our life context. In this sense we keep naming and cultivating the ancient thought over and over again. Technē as the living art is an extension of our context by ancient paradigms, which are brought into the square of our views and life: paradeigmatidzē means to expose as shameful. Here, they become real by participating in the environment of our interaction between noesis and noema, while the environment is in turn extended by them. We embody the ancient thought by making it a part of our existential environment, in which we create the text of our life. Mobile interaction of parts converts text into context during creation; we become the authors and the heroes of our life-stories.

The story we create is a mobile living whole, the limits of which change constantly: metaphoreō. Metaphor (for example, “the life square”) embodies the existential project’s technē, which covers the technology of life-story writing. Therefore, we have approached the sense of ancient philosophy as the art of life (Lebenskunst, technē ton bion, bio-technē), a notion reborn within existential philosophy. However, writing is not poisonous for either remembrance or thought, as stated by Plato in Faedrus and interpreted by Derrida. By writing we create our life context, which is named as logos. Therefore, we talk of existential biotechnology as the art of life in the spiritual environment. It is the art of existential graphics, i.e. of the inscription of life context into our mobile spiritual context. Logos expresses the linguistic-scriptural character of culture as an existential creation: the living whole is realized by naming it the part of an existential text and inscribing it into the spiritual context. Therefore, spiritualizing (expanding the context) is inseparable from the embodiment (handiness by cultivation) in the process of writing our existential novels.

Conclusions

The etymological analysis of the concepts bios, technē and logos opens the path towards their ancient senses, in the interpretation of which we expand our spiritual environment. Interpretation emerges between (inter) remem-
branches and expectations; it changes under the influence of our existential creation. We live by creating an existential whole that was inscribed in the spiritual context as the mobile environment of our coming into being. *Bios*, while being interpreted, expresses both the vitality of the spiritual environment and of our living creation. It thereby reflects the corporal aspect of the spiritual environment: existential creation is not only conditioned by our being-towards-death, but it also requires the efforts of our body (cultivation of the handy phenomena). Body is a particular sensual (spatial and temporal) whole, which distinguishes itself from the environment only by means of interaction with other wholes. The spatial and temporal whole of body-towards-death is the existential one: it consists of the components which are handy in respect to existential creation. Therefore, the embodiment (inscription into an existential whole) is intertwined with spiritualization (expansion of spiritual environment). The latter aspect is expressed by *logos*, which is interpreted as the spiritual environment, where our existential creations are named and inscribed. *Logos* guarantees the linguistic co-existence of existential participants in the living (interpretational) context. *Technē* is to be interpreted as a twofold art of both the existential whole (novel) creation and its inscription into the spiritual context. *Bios, technē* and *logos* are to be interpreted as analogous (*ana ton logon*), i.e. interactive components of existential creation in both a narrow (life-story) and a broad (spiritual environment) sense. Thus, the discourse of globalization is polyphonic. Etymological and phenomenological analyses of the key words of globalization presuppose a creative interaction between local and global planes. On the one hand, the local plane could be represented by both an individual and a nation. On the other hand, the global plane could be represented by both the whole of our life-story and the whole of human history. Our creative activity is made possible in the tension between individual and social life. Therefore, globalization presents both an existential danger and our creative possibility.

**Literature**

Бахтин, Михаил, Автор и герой, Азбука, Санкт-Петербург 2000.


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Diskurs globalizacije: bios, technē i logos
iz fenomenološke perspektive

Zusammenfassung

In dem Artikel werden die Schlüsselwörter der Globalisierung – Bios, Technē und Logos – etymologisch ergründet, und überdies im Kontext der existenziellen Phänomenologie interpretiert. Zu diesem Zweck beruht man sich nicht nur auf Heidegger, den Beweger existenzieller Interpretation antiker Begriffe, sondern auch auf Husserl, Gadamer, Lévinas und Bakhtin. Vorgestellt wurden drei Thesen: 1) Unser Körper ist von der geistigen Umwelt un trennbar, wo er heranreift, indem er geistige Funktionen erlangt, die heißt durch Beseelung, Benennung und Verwirklichung. 2) Die geistige Umwelt ist gleichlaufend eine technologische Umwelt, wo die Technē als Kunst der Erschaffung interaktiver Umweltnomponenten wie Körper oder Geist auszulegen ist. 3) Der Logos als Wort und Name supponiert den Text bzw. das Buch aus der Feder unseres

Schlüsselwörter
Globalisierung, Bios, Technē, Logos, Existentielle Phänomenologie

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Le discours de la globalisation : bios, technē et logos
d’un point de vue phénoménologique

Résumé
L’article examine l’étymologie des mots-clés de la globalisation : bios, technē et logos, puis les interprète dans le contexte de la phénoménologie existentielle. A cet effet, il ne s’appuie pas que sur Heidegger, qui a initié l’interprétation existentielle des termes antiques, mais aussi sur Husserl, Gadamer, Lévinas et Bakhtine. Trois propositions sont examinées : 1) notre corps est inséparable de l’environnement spirituel où il mûrit en acquérant des fonctions spirituelles, c’est-à-dire en se spiritualisant, en se nommant et en se réalisant ; 2) l’environnement spirituel est en même temps technologique, où technē doit être interprétée comme l’art de la création de la composante interactive de l’environnement telle que le corps et l’esprit ; 3) logos comme mot et nom suppose un texte, c’est-à-dire un livre écrit par notre vie, ainsi qu’un contexte, c’est-à-dire l’interaction des textes en tant qu’histoires de vie. Il est affirmé que bios, technē et logos doivent être interprétés de façon analogue, c’est-à-dire comme des composantes interactives de la création existentielle qui comportent différents niveaux de liens entre l’environnement spirituel et l’histoire de vie qui s’y déroule. Bios est lié à l’aspect corporel de la création existentielle : notre vie, de la naissance à la mort, est inséparable de l’implication des phénomènes dans l’unité temporelle et spatiale comprise dans l’environnement spirituel. Le logos reflète la nature linguistico-scripturale du contexte spirituel de l’environnement. Technē est interprétée à la fois comme acte de création de l’unité existentielle et comme acte de son inscription dans ce contexte. En conséquence, bios, technē et logos sont interprétés de manière alternative par rapport au discours de la globalisation.

Mots-clés
globalisation, bios, technē, logos, phénoménologie existentielle