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## **Kant, Husserl, and the Aim of a “Transcendental Anthropology”**

Claudia Serban

“Ich und Menschheit, das ist eben nicht ein Nebeneinander, sondern ein Ineinander, so vor allem transzendental und absolut verstanden.”

(Husserl 1989, Hua XXVII, p. 235)

**Abstract:** This chapter deals with the question of whether transcendental philosophy should inevitably have to choose between subscribing to an “anthropological prohibition” (denounced by Blumenberg) or accepting an “anthropologization” of the transcendental (disavowed by Husserl). While examining the relationship between transcendental philosophy and anthropology both in Kant and Husserl, a special emphasis is placed upon their common idea of a “transcendental anthropology.” The project of such an anthropology addresses the necessity of developing the transcendental egology in several directions, in order to incorporate and re-elaborate certain fundamental aspects of the empirical – psychological or worldly – dimension of subjective life. Thus, it is not only the core of a philosophical anthropology and of its concept of humanity that might be reshaped, but also the meaning and scope of the transcendental itself.

Does transcendental philosophy necessarily lead either to an “anthropological prohibition” (like the one identified by Blumenberg in his reading of Husserl and Heidegger<sup>1</sup>) or to an “anthropologization” of the transcendental (such as the one that Husserl had denounced in Kant)? Is this alternative truly a dead end? It is this two-layered question that will be handled here, in respect to both Kant and Husserl.

### **§ 1 From Empirical Egology to Transcendental Anthropology**

Without a doubt, the accusation of “transcendental anthropologism” that Husserl directed against the author of the *Critiques* has some truth to it. As one reads in his *Reflections on*

*Anthropology* – and more precisely, in *Reflection 875* stemming (according to Adickes) from 1776-1778, a period during which the critical enterprise was in full development –, Kant was willing to admit that “[e]verything that obtains its rule not on objective, but on subjective grounds [...] pertains to anthropology” (Kant 1913, AK. XV, p. 384). In this sense, the meaning of the transcendental according to Kant does indeed contain an anthropological element. Nevertheless, in understanding this element as the subjective constitution of the “rational finite being” that we are, the author of the *Critiques* had openly hesitated to admit that transcendental philosophy had a properly anthropological *ground*. The human being and its reason do not entirely coincide: as Blumenberg put it (with his characteristically sharp irony), for Kant, in a way, “[t]he human being is the cheap, popular edition of reason [*Der Mensch ist die verbilligte Volksausgabe der Vernunft*]” (Blumenberg 2006, p. 501). But might one paraphrase this statement and say that anthropology is the cheap, popular edition of transcendental philosophy?

The relationship between transcendental philosophy and anthropology in Kant has attracted the attention of scholars for a long time. In more recent research, one of the works particularly worthy of mention is the famous interpretation of Foucault (developed in the 60s, but made fully accessible to the public only in 2008), in the “Introduction” accompanying his translation of Kant’s *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*. In this “Introduction”, Foucault makes the henceforth famous claim of an “anthropologico-critical repetition” and considers that the *Anthropology* “says nothing *other* than what is said in the *Critique*” and is “only [...] possible [...] from the standpoint of the *Critique* having already reached its end, having already led to the realization of transcendental philosophy” (Foucault 2008a, pp. 52 and 54; Foucault 2008b, pp. 83 and 87)<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, in his imposing work on Kant’s *Anthropology*, Reinhard Brandt has expressed reservation with regard to such a tendency to minimize the distance between (pragmatic) anthropology and transcendental philosophy, and even considered that “as a piece of popular philosophy, anthropology, empirical or pragmatic, does not belong to philosophy in a strict sense” (Brandt 1996, p. 26).<sup>3</sup>

As a preamble to our inquiry, this tacit depreciation of Kant’s anthropology on account of its “popular” character, often reiterated in Kantian literature, deserves to be taken seriously. First of all, what serves as a basis for the popular character of the *Anthropology* in the opinion of its author? Importantly, while stressing the systematic character of his enterprise, Kant also insists, in the

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2 Another relevant contribution in French literature is that of Alain Renaut, in the “Presentation” of his new translation of Kant’s *Anthropology* and in a paper published in 1997. Renaut insists both upon the fact that the *Anthropology* is “impossible to situate (*insituable*)” within critical philosophy and upon the fact that the question of the human progressively reveals itself for Kant as “the center of the system” (Renaut 1997, p. 57; Renaut 1993, p. 5), while also highlighting the reasons for which pragmatic anthropology is “the veritable inheritor of rational psychology” (Renaut 1993, p. 32).

3 See also Loudon 2000, p. 66.

“Foreword” to his work, on “reference to examples which can be found by every reader” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 121; Kant 2006, p. 5). This use of examples, which can cause Kant’s *Anthropology* to appear irremediably obsolete, excessively boring, or filled with prejudices unacceptable in the eyes of contemporary readers, can be understood in different ways. One can either see it as a proof of a kind of anthropology that is mostly literary in its sources (as Reinhard Brandt does), or pay more attention to its subtle swaying between the third and the first person speech. It is too seldom observed that in his *Anthropology* Kant makes room for descriptions of genuine experience, sometimes (not very often, it is true) even given in first-person speech. Such is the case of the quite exceptional passages in which he recalls his childhood dream of drowning (§ 37) or describes the episode of his sea-sickness during the crossing from Pillau to Königsberg (§ 29),<sup>4</sup> passages that can be read as a consequence and application of the egological point of departure of his inquiry, according to which self-consciousness and the possession of the representation of the “I” are the distinctive landmarks for approaching the human being (§ 1).

And yet, one should not too hastily conclude that Kant is conflating anthropology and autobiography, or that his *Anthropology* consists mainly of a collection of anecdotes: as he puts it in his famous 1773 Letter to Marcus Herz, in which he describes the intention of his *Anthropology* lecture and distances himself from the current practice of the discipline: “my plan is quite unique. [...] I shall seek to discuss phenomena and their laws rather than the foundations of the possibility of modifying human nature in general” (Kant 1969, AK. X, p. 145; Kant 1999, p. 141).<sup>5</sup> Thus, the aim of the *Anthropology* is to display and describe a legality of experience – a legality wider or, in any case, distinct from that prescribed by the nature of our understanding. In this respect, I fully share Reinhard Brandt’s opinion of seeing in this statement of intention the expression of a “phenomenological attitude” (Brandt 1996, p. 31, note 1), or the sentiment of Bernard Vandewalle when he writes that “Kantian anthropology equally attests an interest for the concrete forms of human existence that finds a certain echo in contemporary phenomenologies” (Vandewalle 1997, p. 185).

Nevertheless, Kant’s practice and idea of anthropology goes further than this original alliance between an empirical egology and a descriptive (proto-)phenomenology. As a postcritical work, the *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View* (and the “Didactic” in particular) is not simply rich in passages that mobilize the results of the first *Critique* and allow one to speak, as did Foucault, of an “anthropologico-critical repetition”; what is more, the proximity between transcendental philosophy and its anthropological extension can appear as predetermined from the very beginning. At least this is what the fascinating and tricky *hapax* mention of an “*Anthropologia*

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4 First-person descriptions are also to be found, for instance, in §§ 85 and 88.

5 The English translation was modified here in accordance with the German original.

*transcendentalis*” in the famous “Reflection on Anthropology n° 903”, stemming from 1776-78 (Kant 1913, AK. XV, pp. 394-395) appears to suggest. This peculiar “Reflection” deals with the case of the “science egoist”, or the scholar who, as a prisoner of his research domain, resembles a Cyclops who lacks a “second eye”: namely, the eye or the specific gaze provided by “the reflexive knowledge of human reason.” And it is precisely this “reflexive self-knowledge of understanding and reason” that Kant depicts as “*Anthropologia transcendentalis*.” Of course, one should not take this expression too literally: a reticence like that of Reinhard Brandt, who considers that “Kant has never – not in a lecture, not in a writing – elaborated this transcendental anthropology as a discipline, or even mentioned such a discipline”, is more than legitimate. Indeed, in its pragmatic version, anthropology “is not a part of critical philosophy, or of transcendental philosophy” (Brandt 1996, p. 26).<sup>6</sup> However, it is still significant that Kant speaks of a “transcendental anthropology” while plainly referring to the “plan of the critique of pure reason”, in other words, that this expression should designate precisely the task of a self-knowledge of reason – of a reason that knows itself *as human*; and it is equally significant that, in this context, it should be so tempting to replace “*anthropologia*” by “*philosophia*” and conceive of a form of coincidence between anthropology and transcendental philosophy. Here, we once again stumble upon Blumenberg’s ironic sentence according to which for Kant the human being is “the cheap, popular edition of reason”; however, in this context, anthropology is not necessarily interpreted as “popular” (or “mundane”) in a pejorative sense.

As we shall see further on, an equally remarkable occurrence of “transcendental anthropology” is to be found in Husserl, where it is explicitly present only as the designation of a subgroup of work manuscripts, and yet not entirely disconnected from the research program of transcendental phenomenology. Let us also briefly remark that another important affinity between the anthropology developed by Kant subsequent to (or even in parallel with) his critical philosophy and Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology consists in their common reticence towards what one might call, in terms that are closer to contemporary debates, the “naturalization of consciousness.” In this regard, the passage from the 1773 Letter to Marcus Herz quoted above continues as follows: “Hence the subtle and, in my view, eternally futile inquiries as to the manner in which bodily organs are connected with thought I omit entirely” (Kant 1969, AK. X, p. 145; Kant 1999, p. 141). Quite similarly, the Preface to the *Anthropology* will state, with regard to the naturalist or physiological explanation of human behavior, that “every reasoning led in this direction is

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<sup>6</sup> See also, from the same author, the *Kritischer Kommentar zu Kants Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (Brandt 1999, pp. 7-20).

A different view, and closer to our perspective, is expressed by Claudia M. Schmidt in her paper “Kant’s Transcendental, Empirical, Pragmatic, and Moral Anthropology” (Schmidt 2007), who distinguishes different anthropological projects in Kant and considers the 1798 work to be the result of their joint elaboration.

unproductive” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 119; Kant 2006, p. 3). Both transcendental philosophy and (postcritical or pragmatic) anthropology reject the physiological approach to consciousness and trade the aim of causal explanation for that of phenomenological description: thus, quite predictably, Kant could only be an ally in Husserl’s combat against naturalism.

## § 2 Psychology, Anthropology, and Transcendental Philosophy

Yet, in his *Crisis of European Sciences*, § 57, Husserl reproaches Kant for the “fateful separation [*verhängnisvolle Trennung*]” he had established between transcendental philosophy and psychology and pleads instead for the “transformation [of psychology] into a universal transcendental philosophy” (Husserl 1954, Hua VI, pp. 201 and 207; Husserl 1970, pp. 198 and 203). Such a transformation, which Husserl envisions accomplishing in his latest work, would manifestly transgress a Kantian prohibition. For this reason, the fate of psychology within transcendental philosophy has a profound impact on the particular status of anthropology, given that the meaning of anthropology is as highly dependent upon the division between the empirical and the transcendental as that of psychology, and confronts us with a certain account of the empirical subject as well.

Husserl’s uncompromising dissatisfaction with Kant’s version of transcendental philosophy is well known: in spite of his sustained combat against dogmatism, Kant has presumably failed to complete his critical enterprise and remained prisoner of certain serious dogmatic presuppositions. In particular, while limiting the validity of our categorial framework to objects given to our sensibility, he had acquiesced to the subjection of our knowledge to a double restriction, phenomenal and anthropological. Husserl also finds it “rather surprising that, since Kant, transcendental philosophy has not really profited from psychology”, and even asks himself, focusing on Kant’s critical enterprise, “why did it not work out a better psychology” (Husserl 1954, Hua VI, p. 205; Husserl 1970, p. 201). By aiming at grounding and developing “the relationship between transcendental psychology and transcendental phenomenology as an authentic way to a pure self-knowledge”, the last sequence of the *Crisis* openly confirms that Husserl not only believed in the possibility of a pure self-knowledge – and consequently, of a pure (apriorical or eidetic) psychology –, but even envisioned a form of psychology intimately related to transcendental philosophy “in virtue of the alliance of difference and identity [*Verschwisterung der Verschiedenheit und Identität*] [...] between the psychological ego (the human ego, that is, made worldly in the spatiotemporal world) and the transcendental ego” (Husserl 1954, Hua VI, p. 209; Husserl 1970, p. 205).

By re-establishing an “indissoluble inner alliance [*unlösliche innere Verschwisterung*]” (Husserl 1954, Hua VI, p. 210; Husserl 1970, p. 206) between transcendental philosophy and psychology in this fashion, the phenomenologist is well aware of transgressing a Kantian prohibition. But he considers that his project of an apriorical psychology that is ultimately transcendental does not fall under this prohibition, which is only directed against dogmatic rational psychology and empirical psychology of introspection.<sup>7</sup> Husserl’s manifold protestations against the fate to which Kant condemns psychology (by decreeing that it can only be empirical, and thus non-scientific, and that a presumably pure psychology would necessarily be dialectic) nevertheless suggest that he might not have fully grasped the meaning and the ultimate implications of this profound reticence. In this respect, one could indeed agree with Blumenberg, when he writes the following:

In his *pathos* of a new beginning of philosophy directed against its decay into psychologism, Husserl disdained the historical results as being that which had made this decay possible. This concerns first of all his relation to Kant. Had he not done so, he couldn’t have entrusted to self-experience all the profit that phenomenology has to rely on. One has to admit that phenomenology would have paid a high price for being lectured by Kant. (Blumenberg 2006, p. 162)

This quote points to the Kantian lesson that Husserl would not have been able to take advantage of, in Blumenberg’s view: namely, that of questioning the rights of internal experience with respect to self-knowledge. As it is well known, for Kant, this interrogation reaches its climax in the “Refutation of Idealism”, which was inserted into the “Analytic of Principles” in 1787. By means of this “Refutation”, it was shown that internal and external experience are not equally fundamental and profitable with respect to knowledge, and that the presupposed primacy and superiority of internal experience must, in fact, be reversed. And it is precisely this inversion that is responsible for the definitive destitution of psychology, rational or empirical, and for the alternative proposal of a pragmatic (or postcritical) anthropology destined to restore balance to the relationship between the “inner” and the “outer man.”

Of course, the way the *Critique of Pure Reason* defuses the surreptitious identification of the unity of thought with the object of internal intuition, or myself as given in time, is equally responsible of the destitution of psychology. As a result, “the whole of rational psychology, as a

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7 As the “Introduction” to the 1925 lecture on *Phenomenological Psychology* clearly states: “In previous times admittedly, *a priori* psychology was much discussed, namely, in the Leibnizian-Wolffean school of the eighteenth century. Kant’s critique put an end to that. But this psychology was ontological-metaphysical. It was not a psychology which like this new one was purely intuitive and descriptive and yet at the same time *a priori*, which therefore, beginning with intuitive concrete instances ascended to intuitive necessities and universalities” (Husserl 1962, Hua IX, p. 39; Husserl 1977, p. 28).

science transcending all the powers of human reason, collapses” (Kant 1903 (A 382), AK. IV, p. 217; Kant 1998, p. 432).<sup>8</sup> The “Preface” to the *First Metaphysical Principles of the Science of Nature*, published between the two editions of the first *Critique*, is equally severe towards empirical psychology, in stating that it “can never become anything more than an historical doctrine of nature, and, as such, a natural doctrine of inner sense which is as systematic as possible, that is, a natural description of the soul, but never a science of the soul, nor even, indeed, an experimental psychological doctrine”, given that “mathematics is not applicable to the phenomena of inner sense and their laws” (Kant 1903, AK. IV, p. 471; Kant 2004, p. 7). However, it is precisely the firm rejection of any form of scientific psychology and the new articulation of the relationship between internal and external experience that leads Kant to develop his pragmatic anthropology as a genuine means of replacing (rational or empirical) psychology.<sup>9</sup>

### § 3 The Anthropological Clause

Undoubtedly, Husserl was not willing to follow Kant in his condemnation of psychology. He even considered that the author of the *Critiques* not only failed to reform psychology in accordance with transcendental philosophy, but also surreptitiously maintained a significant residue of former, precritical psychology within transcendental philosophy itself, by submitting it to an anthropological restriction evident in the clause “for us humans.” Indeed, this clause unavoidably weakens the status of the *a priori* (of the universal, non-empirical features of our knowledge and experience), by entailing what Husserl denounces as its illegitimate anthropologization. For the phenomenologist, such an anthropologization is unfounded and misleading, insofar as the *a priori* does not solely pertain to the form that the cognizing subjectivity prescribes to the object, but is grounded in the very content of knowledge, in the essential features of the cognized type of object. Thus, the *a priori* is valid for any kind of subjectivity, be it human or not, and it is only on this condition that it can be regarded as truly necessary, in the sense of a necessity – namely, that of the essence of the object – which does not depend upon any facticity. The *a priori* that takes root in such an essence imposes itself upon every cognizing subjectivity: this is the meaning of the clause “even for God” (Husserl 1976, Hua III/1, pp. 350-351) that Husserl substitutes for the Kantian clause “for finite rational beings like us” or “for us humans.” In doing so, the phenomenologist firmly rejects the hypothesis of an intellect with logical laws other than our own, for such an hypothesis would inevitably lead to assigning a merely anthropological validity to the form of our

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8 See also Kant 1903 (A 361), AK. IV, p. 227; Kant 1998, p. 422.

9 The sharp separation between pragmatic anthropology and psychology is also stressed by Kant in a *Reflection* from the 1780s: “Pragmatic anthropology should not be psychology” (Kant 1913, Reflection 1502a, AK. XV, p. 801). See also Wilson 2006, pp. 20-33; Louden 2000, pp. 63-66.



knowledge. In a 1908 research manuscript that bears the title “Against Kant’s Anthropological Theory” (where the target, accordingly, is not the anthropology subsequently developed by the author of the *Critiques*, but rather the anthropological restriction that weighs upon his transcendental philosophy), Husserl denounces the fact that Kant “confounds the necessity and generality of the human fact with the necessity and generality pertaining to the content of the evidence and which is the opposite of any fact”; more precisely, “he confounds the general constraint derived from the human specificity (from a fact) [...] with the necessity apprehended in the evidence of ‘it cannot be otherwise’” (Husserl 1956, Hua VII, pp. 358-359). Indeed, for Husserl, the step taken by Fries in 1807 with his *Neue oder anthropologische Kritik der Vernunft* had largely been prefigured by Kant himself, who had already engaged in the anthropologization of the transcendental. Thus, Husserl holds the critical enterprise responsible for a genuine “shift to relativism and anthropologism [*Wendung zum Relativismus und Anthropologismus*]” (Husserl 1956, Hua VII, p. 354).

However, the anthropological restriction that the phenomenologist diagnoses in Kant’s transcendental philosophy goes even further. Husserl deplores the ambiguous status of the Kantian faculties which he considers to be merely psychological powers whose transcendental genesis remains unclear, and for him this constitutes an irrefutable proof of Kant’s clear affiliation with a subtle form of psychologism.<sup>10</sup> While challenging the thoroughgoing necessity of what pertains to the subjective faculties – to their structures and accomplishments –, Kant presumably amalgamated “the factual and the apriorical” in his transcendental considerations, and in doing so, he had been guilty of disregarding the true nature of the “phenomenological *a priori*” (Husserl 1956, Hua VII, p. 390). The ultimate reason for this confusion is promptly revealed by Husserl in very clear terms: “Because he understands inner perception in this empiricist, psychological sense, [...] Kant gets involved in his mythical concept-formation” (Husserl 1954, Hua VI, p. 117; Husserl 1970, p. 115). The all-too-narrow scope and meaning that the author of the *Critique* prescribes to internal perception does not allow him to truly overcome the psychology of his time and condemns him to endorse its shortcomings.

Yet, with this severe diagnosis, the Husserl of the *Crisis* does not intend – as he did when he made psychology rhyme with psychologism – to plead for a firm separation between transcendental philosophy and psychology, but, quite the contrary, to deplore the inconveniences of such a separation and stress the “indissoluble inner alliance (*unlösliche innere Verschwisterung*)” (Husserl

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10 According to the *Crisis of European Sciences*, the “faculties”, “functions”, or transcendental-subjective “formations” presupposed by the critical discourse are only “mythical constructions” that reveal the “obscurities of the Kantian philosophy” and that in their literal meaning “poin[t] to something subjective, but a mode of the subjective which we are in principle unable to make intuitive to ourselves” (Husserl 1954, Hua VI, p. 116; Husserl 1970, p. 114).

1954, Hua VI, p. 210; Husserl 1970, p. 206) of these twin disciplines, an alliance which reflects that of the transcendental and the psychological “I.” Consequently, unlike what one might be led to believe, it is not the presence of a psychological residue that ultimately disqualifies Kant’s transcendental philosophy in Husserl’s eyes, but rather the absence, within critical philosophy, of a renewed psychology made compatible with the transcendental enterprise, an absence which is fundamentally motivated by the distrust of internal experience. This once again proves that the profound reasons for the divorce which Kant had proclaimed between the transcendental and the psychological “I” were never considered to be consistent enough and were therefore never ratified by Husserl.

#### § 4 From the Inner to the Outer Man

In the preceding paragraphs, I have already brought up the new kind of relationship that the first *Critique*, and especially the 1787 edition, institutes between interiority and exteriority. In this regard, I will presently attempt to show – and, in my opinion, this is a point that remarkably illustrates Foucault’s idea of the “anthropologico-critical repetition” (Foucault 2008a, p. 52; Foucault 2008b, p. 83) – that the same kind of relationship is to be found, in Kant’s anthropology, between what he calls the “inner man” and the “outer man.” This should not only justify and explain Kant’s reticence towards a rehabilitation of psychology within transcendental – critical or postcritical – philosophy, but also allow one to solve some of the difficulties and paradoxes legitimately pointed out by scholars. First and foremost, such is the case with the program of the *Anthropology From A Pragmatic Point of View* and its realization: if the inaugural characterization of anthropology as “knowledge of the world [*Weltkenntnis*]” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 120; Kant 2006, p. 4)<sup>11</sup>, contained in the “Foreword”, is taken seriously, one would be quite surprised to acknowledge, as Foucault has emphasized, that “the majority of the analyses, and virtually all those which appear in the first part of the book, are undertaken not in the cosmopolitical dimension of the *Welt*, but that other – interior – dimension of the *Gemüt*” (Foucault 2008a, p. 34; Foucault 2008b, p. 55). Of course, the *Gemüt* is not the *Seele*, and is irreducible to a psychological interiority; yet, one could still remain under the impression that the 1798 *Anthropology* gives up on keeping its initial promise to study the human being as a citizen of the world.

Is this impression truly justified? I would say, quite the contrary – and this clarification should contribute to a dissipation of this apparent contradiction to a certain extent –, the stake of the *Anthropology* consists precisely in revealing the conditioning of the “inner man” by the “outer man.” Importantly, it is for this reason that its development rests upon an inner experience which is

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11 Cf. also “Reflection” 1482 (Kant 1913, AK. XV, p. 659).

continually conditioned by outer experience, or upon a self-experience that is continually conditioned by the experience of the world (and of humans as beings-in-the-world). Far from proposing a description of interiority, the “Anthropological Didactic” places the inner man and the outer man on the same level and categorically refuses any privilege to self-experience. Furthermore, on more than one occasion, Kant expresses his reticence towards the presumed richness of introspection or superiority of inner experience: such is the case, for instance, of § 4, in which he deals with self-observation (*Selbstbeobachtung*) and confesses that “the real purpose of this section concerns the warning mentioned above, namely not to concern oneself in the least with spying and, as it were, the affected composition of an inner history of the involuntary course of one’s thoughts and feelings”, explained a bit further on: “For the situation with these inner experiences is not as it is with external experiences or objects in space, where the objects appear next to each other and *permanently* fixed. Inner sense sees the relations or its determinations only in time, hence in flux, where the stability of observation necessary for experience does not occur” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, pp. 133 and 134; Kant 2006, pp. 22 and 22-23). It is the very argument of the “Refutation of Idealism” that Kant recalls here: inner experience cannot provide us with the representation of permanence, and therefore is profoundly dependent upon outer experience.

But then, how can anthropology present itself as an empirical egology, as seen previously, and orchestrate such a superimposition of the description of the human over the description of the “I” from the very beginning – from the first paragraph, where the dignity of the human being is rooted in the fact of having “the I in its representation”? Let us not forget that this egological starting point is immediately exposed to potential deviations implied within this very capacity of saying “I”; indeed, § 2 provides us with a presentation of the different forms of egoism: logical, aesthetic, and moral. Consequently, even if the egological problematic as such “does not really belong to anthropology”, according to the famous “Remark” of § 7 (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 142; Kant 2006, p. 33), questioning the status and the value of the “I” is an efficient means of delimiting the domain of anthropology both with respect to psychology and that which, within transcendental philosophy, pertains to logic. While recalling the division of apperception into pure and empirical in order to similarly divide self-consciousness into intuiting and reflecting consciousness, Kant clearly draws a demarcation line: “In psychology we investigate ourselves according to our ideas of inner sense; in logic, according to what intellectual consciousness suggests” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 134; Kant 2006, p. 23). The error and the intrinsic insufficiency of psychology does indeed come from its failure to maintain a distinction between the apperception and the inner sense. In turn, pragmatic anthropology will not discredit that which is given through inner experience, but will approach it with a new attitude: while from the point of view of (rational) psychology “the mind, which is represented as a mere faculty of feeling and thinking, is regarded as a special substance dwelling in

the human being”, (pragmatic) anthropology, in turn, “abstract[s] from the question of whether the human being has a soul or not (as a special incorporeal substance)” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 161; Kant 2006, p. 53). The *Gemüt* that the *Anthropology* deals with, just like the *Gemüt* of transcendental philosophy, does not belong to the domain of psychology, whether rational or empirical. Following this description, it is once again tempting to consider Kant’s anthropology as a discipline that accomplishes a peculiar form of phenomenological reduction, by refusing to objectify the data of internal experience and thus remaining equally distant from the metaphysical, rational psychology and from empirical psychology. This point provides us with a further justification of Kant’s intention, expressed within the *Critique of Pure Reason*, of transforming empirical psychology into a “complete anthropology” (Kant 1904 (A 849/B 877), AK. III, p. 548; Kant 1998, p. 700). From psychology to anthropology, it is indeed necessary to redefine the object of inquiry by joining the outer man to the inner man and by articulating the first-person and the third-person approach.

If Kant insists upon the necessity of separating pure apperception from the empirical one with such vehemence, he does so in order to delimit transcendental philosophy (and logic, in particular) from psychology, the error of the psychological approach – that Husserl will later denounce under the name of psychologism – being, once again, that of confusing the inner sense as “psychological (applied) consciousness” with “pure, logical consciousness” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 142; Kant 2006, p. 33). Yet even this necessary demarcation will not suffice to dissipate the difficulties of self-knowledge: as an important passage of Kant’s *Anthropology* (§ 7) puts it,

[...] knowledge of the human being through inner experience, because to a large extent one also judges others according to it, is more important than correct judgment of others, but nevertheless at the same time perhaps more difficult. For he who investigates his interior easily *carries* many things into self-consciousness instead of merely observing. (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 143; Kant 2006, p. 34)

In other words, even when it is limited in its pretensions and carefully distinguished from pure apperception, the inner sense is unable to fulfill the promise of a perfect self-knowledge. This is the reason why the consideration of the “inner man” has to be complemented by that of the “outer man”, in order to refrain from the propensity “to accept the play of ideas of inner sense as experiential cognition, although it is only a fiction” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 161; Kant 2006, p. 54) – a fiction which carries the name of *Schwärmerei*. In this respect, the *Anthropology* gets even more categorical at the end of § 24, which deals precisely with the inner sense, and where Kant stresses that the “tendency to retire into oneself, together with the resulting illusions of inner sense, can only be set right when the human being is led back into the external world and by means of this to the

order of things present to the outer senses” (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 162; Kant 2006, p. 54).<sup>12</sup> The conviction expressed in this quote can easily be contrasted with Husserl’s espousal of Saint Augustine at the very end of his *Cartesian Meditations*: “*Noli foras ire, in te redi, in interiore hominis habitat veritas*” (*De vera religione*, 39,72).<sup>13</sup> Therefore, one should not hastily believe that the analytic of *Gemüt* deployed in the *Anthropology* leaves aside the human being regarded as a citizen of the world or forgets its initial intention to provide a knowledge of the world (*Weltkenntnis*) by means of anthropology: quite on the contrary, its specific approach accomplishes and justifies the transition from the “inner man” to the “outer man”, a transition in which, as Foucault puts it in a curiously serious manner, “the secret of [subjective] Power reveals itself in the dazzle of the Phenomenon” (Foucault 2008a, pp. 44-45; Foucault 2008b, pp. 71-72), or where the transition from *Vermögen* to *Erscheinung* takes the shape of an adventure that both manifests and challenges the “I” as a “being-in-the-world.”

Thus, it has progressively emerged that far from being inessential or redundant, anthropology is a vital and necessary extension with respect to critical philosophy. Indeed, Kant’s 1798 *Anthropology* addresses a postcritical necessity, and proves that instead of venturing an anthropological prohibition, the *Critique* launches a call for an anthropology.<sup>14</sup> But is this not a point in respect to which Kant’s and Husserl’s paths are irredeemably meant to part, just as they did when the fate of psychology from the standpoint of transcendental philosophy was at stake?

## § 5 Transcendental Phenomenology and Anthropology

If the aim of the famous 1931 conference on “Phenomenology and Anthropology” consists mainly in distinguishing and separating the two, Husserl’s research manuscripts from the same period thoroughly explore and elaborate what the conference had already designated as their “intrinsic affinity [*innere Affinität*]” (Husserl 1989, Hua XXVII, p. 181; Husserl 1997, p. 500). This suggests that instead of always excluding each other, transcendental phenomenology and anthropology are not necessarily condemned to collide or take different paths – insofar as they are, on the one hand, the science of the transcendental and, on the other, the science of the empirical. Furthermore, the link that can be established between the two is not only that of the transcendental-apriorical foundation of the empirical-factual, but equally one of the rooting of the transcendental

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12 See also “Reflection” 284 (Kant 1913, AK. XV, p. 106).

13 It is significant that this quote from Augustine should also appear in a 1930 text where Husserl presents and defends his proposal of a “true, philosophically authentic anthropology (*die wahre, die philosophisch echte Anthropologie*)” (Husserl 2002, Hua XXXIV, p. 246).

14 In this respect, I agree with Alix Cohen, who speaks of “A Pragmatic Counterpart to the Transcendental Project” in *Kant and the Human Sciences. Biology, Anthropology and History*, and considers that the “pragmatic counterpart” “entails a crucial re-interpretation of the transcendental project itself” (Cohen 2009, pp. 143-145). Moreover, she also pays special attention to the idea of a transcendental anthropology (Cohen 2009, p. 183, note 1).

within the concrete facticity of human subjectivity. As previously seen, if Kant had considered that “[e]verything that obtains its rule not on objective, but on subjective grounds [...] pertains to anthropology” (Kant 1913, AK. XV, p. 384), in Husserl’s research manuscripts one can similarly read the following: “Transcendental philosophy is necessarily related to me and thus to a humanity, to my humanity” (Husserl 1993, Hua XXIX, p. 332).<sup>15</sup> But the remaining question is one of knowing what the nature of this mutual presupposition might be, and under which condition it might result not merely in a parallelism but rather in a “reciprocal envelopment”, as Merleau-Ponty put it in his famous article on “The Philosopher and the Sociologist” (Merleau-Ponty 2001 [1960], p. 166; Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 102),<sup>16</sup> and as the exergue of this study also suggests.

Yet, far from immediately embracing such a conciliatory perspective, Husserl spoke, in his 1931 public lecture, of “a fundamental decision between anthropologism and transcendentalism” (Husserl 1989, Hua XXVII, p. 165; Husserl 1997, p. 486) and firmly rejected the former as being quite the opposite of the phenomenological attitude. To some extent, this rejection reflects the profound disappointment that Husserl experienced while reading Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. Indeed, his annotations show that he had fully measured the abyss separating the existential analytic from transcendental phenomenology:

Heidegger transposes or changes [*transponiert oder transversiert*] the constitutive-phenomenological clarification of all regions of entities and universals, of the total region of the world, into the anthropological; the whole problematic is shifted over [*die ganze Problematik ist Übertragung*]: corresponding to the ego there is *Dasein*, etc. In that way everything becomes ponderously unclear, and philosophically loses its value. (Husserl 1994b, p. 13; Husserl 1997, p. 284)

As can be observed here, in Husserl’s view, Heidegger’s existential problematic is a mere “anthropological transposition” of his own transcendental analysis. The careful separation between phenomenology and such anthropological inquiries,<sup>17</sup> which he subsequently effectuates, must then be understood as a reaction against such an *Übertragung*. One might consider, however, that Husserl only rejects a certain kind of philosophical anthropology: namely, one that entirely dissolves the transcendental into the empirical and, in doing so, fully “naturalizes” human

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15 “Die Transzendentalphilosophie [...] notwendig auf mich und von mir aus auf eine, meine Menschheit bezogen [ist].” This passage comes from the important 1936 work manuscript entitled “The Anthropological World”, edited by Reinhold N. Smid in the XXIXth volume of the *Husserliana*, which contains complements to the *Crisis of European Sciences*.

16 See also Merleau-Ponty 2001, p. 95.

17 Similarly, while reading and annotating the 37th paragraph of Heidegger’s *Kantbuch*, which deals with “The idea of a philosophical anthropology”, Husserl had immediately recognized in it “the prejudgment of Scheler, Heidegger, Dilthey, and of the whole anthropological line of thought (*das Vorurteil von Scheler, Heidegger, Dilthey und der ganzen anthropologischen Richtung*)” (Husserl 1994b, p. 56; Husserl 1997, p. 455).

subjectivity. Yet, one has to keep in mind that the 1930 *Nachwort* to the *Ideas...I* dismissed just as firmly the “transcendental anthropologism” (Husserl 1952, Hua V, p. 139), designating the fact of attributing a transcendental value and significance to the forms of *human* knowledge, which appeared to be quite a harmful avatar of psychologism. For this reason, as seen previously, such a transcendental anthropologism, which Husserl reckoned to have found in Kant, was held to be an error even more serious than the concession to empirical anthropology, insofar as it threatened the objective and universal grounding of knowledge in general (and of science in particular). For Husserl, this is what ultimately justifies the necessity of a “fundamental decision between anthropologism and transcendentalism.” If anthropologism appears as an omnipresent drift, embracing the path of transcendentalism requires a particular methodological turn:

The reduction is the means of access to this new realm, so when one gets the meaning of the reduction wrong then everything else also goes wrong. The temptation to misunderstandings here is simply overwhelming. For instance, it seems all too obvious to say to oneself: “I, this human being, am the one who is practicing the method of a transcendental alteration of attitude whereby one withdraws back into the pure Ego; so can this Ego be anything other than just a mere abstract stratum of this concrete human being, its purely mental [*geistiges*] being, abstracted from the body?” But clearly those who talk this way have fallen back into the naive natural attitude. Their thinking is grounded in the pre-given world rather than moving within the sphere of the epoché. For, to take oneself as a human being already presupposes an acceptance of validity of the world. What the epoché shows us clearly, however, is that the Ego is the one in whose life-process the apperception “human being”, standing within the universal apperception “world”, acquires and maintains its sense of being. (Husserl 1989, Hua XXVII, pp. 172-173; Husserl 1997, p. 493)

As one can plainly see here, for Husserl, anthropological reflection remains prisoner to the pre-giveness of the world without being able to question it. For this reason, the anthropological problematic is intrinsically a mundane one: here, we discover the Kantian equivalence between *Menschenkenntnis* and *Weltkenntnis* (Kant 1907, AK. VII, p. 120; Kant 2006, p. 4),<sup>18</sup> albeit cast in a new light and in a new relationship with the transcendental problematic. For Husserl, indeed, the transition to the transcendental attitude simultaneously leaves behind the anthropological and the mundane plan: “When, by virtue of the transcendental reduction, I become aware of myself as this kind of Ego, I assume a position above all worldly being [*weltliches Sein*], above my own human being and human living” (Husserl 1989, Hua XXVII, p. 174; Husserl 1997, pp. 494-495). Consequently, anthropology seems to pertain to a level that the phenomenological attitude will

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18 Cf. also “Reflection” 1482, Kant 1913, AK. XV, p. 659.

necessarily overcome by going beyond the pregivenness of the world by virtue of the (ultimately) transcendental reduction.

And yet, this does not suffice to demonstrate the impossibility of a genuinely phenomenological anthropology, insofar as the task remains to “understand, on ultimate transcendental grounds, why [...] anthropology [...] is in fact not just a positive science along with the natural sciences, but rather has an intrinsic affinity with philosophy, with transcendental philosophy” (Husserl 1989, Hua XXVII, p. 181; Husserl 1997, p. 500).<sup>19</sup> Thus, in contrast with transcendental anthropologism, which is the plain negation of the epistemological ambitions of phenomenology, a legitimate phenomenological anthropology can be envisioned, and it could deserve to be called “transcendental” neither because of neglecting or denaturing the empirical, nor because of naturalizing the transcendental, but insofar as it would aim to mutually reshape the transcendental in the light of the anthropological and the anthropological in the light of the transcendental. Thus, instead of a merely mechanical and diminishing “transposition” of the transcendental problematic, such a “transcendental anthropology” would provide us with an anthropological *realization, continuation or fulfillment* of transcendental phenomenology.<sup>20</sup> And if the 1931 conference only mentions the “intrinsic affinity” that allows a reconciliation of phenomenology and anthropology, several research manuscripts from the 30s indicate the means to unveil and elaborate this affinity more explicitly.

## § 6 More than an Oxymoron?

But even if it is not unwarranted to attribute to Husserl the project of a phenomenological anthropology grounded in transcendental philosophy – does this nonetheless give us the right to speak of a “transcendental anthropology”? This expression, already a *hapax* in the Kantian context, designates, in Husserl, a group of research manuscripts (E III)<sup>21</sup> and is not easy to find as such in the texts themselves (whereas a 1929 text belonging to the C-Manuscripts, for instance, plainly speaks of a “transcendental sociology” and importantly defines it with reference to “the community of human beings and its world [*Menschengemeinschaft und ihrer Welt*]”, Husserl 2006, Hua Mat. VIII, p. 165).<sup>22</sup>

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19 In this quote, it is first and foremost the proximity between psychology and transcendental philosophy that Husserl intends to emphasize. Nevertheless, the contemporary research manuscripts display a specific interest in the idea of a phenomenological anthropology: see, for instance, Husserl 1973, Hua XV, texts n° 29 and 30.

20 Arion L. Kelkel has similarly spoken of an “anthropological vocation of phenomenology” (Kelkel 1991). See also Marosán 2016, p. 152.

21 Cf. Husserl 2014, Hua XLII, p. 531.

22 In two other texts from 1930, Husserl also speaks of a “transcendental person” (Husserl 2002, Hua XXXIV, p. 201) and even of a “transcendental humanity (*transzendentes Menschentum*)” (Husserl 2002, Hua XXXIV, p. 153).



In order to give a certain consistency to this apparently oxymoronic expression, I will begin by examining the characterization of anthropology that can be found in the 1932 research manuscript edited by Iso Kern in volume XV of the *Husserliana* (text n° 30): “*Universale Geisteswissenschaft als Anthropologie*.” This unfinished and yet relatively developed text makes a claim that could appear quite surprising, should one forget the intimate solidarity that exists, in Husserl’s view, between the human and that which pertains to the world: “anthropological knowledge *encompasses all world knowledge in general*” (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 480). More precisely, the universality of anthropology is grounded in the fact that any science is the result of human activity, is a human configuration (*Gebilde*) (cf. Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 481): therefore, the science of the human has the status of a “science of science.” It is noticeable that this kind of intrinsic reflexivity specific to the anthropological approach is not very different from the one that the author of the *Critiques* had in mind while speaking of an “*anthropologia transcendentalis*”; and even in the less controversial context of the famous 1773 Letter to Marcus Herz, quoted above, where Kant depicts the intention of his “Anthropology” lecture and stresses the fact that his “plan is quite unique”, the epistemic implications are far from being absent: “I intend to use it to disclose the sources of all sciences [*die Quellen aller Wissenschaften*]” (Kant 1969, AK. X, p. 145; Kant 1999, p. 141).<sup>23</sup> Even more radically, in the eyes of Husserl, the particular epistemic status of anthropology implies that no science can be exterior to it, and from this point of view, the separation between human and natural sciences and the presumptuous epistemic privilege of natural sciences both deserve to be challenged:

Is there a science of nature apart from the universal anthropology? An exact, descriptive science of nature [...]? The science of the human seems to be a particular science. The human being is *within* the world and does not contain the world – and yet, the science of the human, without going beyond the human being as such, encompasses all the sciences. (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 481)

Here, the claim of the universality of anthropology is rooted in a particular vision of scientific activity for which the consideration of the subject of science is far more important than that of its object. But in fact, Husserl goes even further: by asserting the universality of anthropology, his ultimate intention is to emphasize and prepare the transition from a “naturalistic” to an “anthropological attitude” – the latter being, in fact, strikingly close to the transcendental attitude, given that its aim is to highlight the subjective accomplishment that underlies all scientific production. It is in this sense that Husserl suggestively writes:

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Quite unexplainably, the English translation chooses to limit the range of this statement to practical sciences.

It is only when, in an anthropological universal approach, the human person becomes thematic, that the cognizing thematization and the whole operative dimension of the I [*alles fungierende Ichliche*] become thematic. [...] The human person is indeed present in every individual act and within every particular theme, [...] but it depends upon the new task of accomplishing a universal reduction. (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, pp. 482-483)

Here, it appears that the universality of anthropology can only be properly grasped from the standpoint of transcendental phenomenology, or by accomplishing what it would be quite tempting to call, by transposing Foucault's diagnosis onto a phenomenological context, an *anthropologico-transcendental repetition*. This is undoubtedly paradoxical: "We, who are human beings within the world, egological subjects [*Ichsubjekte*], we are those who experience the world and eventually gain a scientific knowledge of the world. Does this not mean that the world in which we find ourselves as subordinate events is our configuration [*Gebilde*] and so that we are ourselves our own configuration? What a nonsense, what a paradox! How can it be solved as an apparent absurdity that nonetheless harbors some truth?" (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 483). Indeed, what appears as nonsense here is only such from the perspective of the natural attitude. The absurdity is resolved by embracing the anthropological attitude, which therefore appears to be intimately close to the transcendental attitude: the key to comprehending the universality of anthropology comes from understanding that both the world and the knowledge of the world are relative to the "operating subjectivity [*fungierende Subjektivität*]" (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 483) and that this relativity is a transcendental one.

### **§ 7 Coincidence Without Identity?**

And yet, even if Husserl's argumentation brings them significantly closer, the anthropological and the transcendental dimension of subjectivity do not fully coincide. Furthermore, their complete coincidence seems strictly impossible, should one want to preserve both the rigor of the transcendental attitude and the concreteness of the anthropological fact. This is undoubtedly the greatest difficulty that the project of a "transcendental anthropology" would have to face. The paradox is newly expressed in a 1933 manuscript: the phenomenological "I" is "the same as an I and as a human person", and "yet I am not the same", insofar as "the egological human life within the world is [...] my transcendental configuration (*Gebilde*)" (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, pp. 540 and 541). However, this does not simply imply that my being human should be erased behind the transcendental dimension of my life; rather, their entanglement is the condition of a new

way of apprehending them both: a transcendental view of the human, on the one hand, and a concrete reshaping of transcendental subjectivity itself, on the other. By adopting this two-sided new perspective, which should lead to eventually accepting that “the human I and the transcendental I must coincide [*sich decken*]” (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 542), a renewed, phenomenological gaze upon subjectivity and humanity can be reached.<sup>24</sup>

From this standpoint, it becomes difficult to unconditionally follow Blumenberg when he reads Husserl in the exclusive light of an “anthropological prohibition” and defines the latter as “the apotropaic action through which the position of the transcendental spectator is fortified.”<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the breakthroughs of Husserl’s late research show that transcendental phenomenology can neither ignore nor exclude that which pertains to the anthropological concreteness of the “I.” As another famous 1933 work manuscript summarizes it, while analyzing the functioning of subjective life: “It all eventually depends on my facticity [*Faktizität*] and on the facticity of my world” (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, pp. 518-519). As we can see, Husserl does not hesitate to admit the priority or even the primacy of the anthropological fact with respect to the transcendental ego. But should it come first, the anthropological fact is not a final end: indeed, Husserl’s approach to the human aims at deepening and surpassing the finite level delineated by this facticity.

This also means that Husserl could on no account approve of Fink’s conception of the transcendental spectator as requiring an *Entmenschung*, a de-humanization of the “I” (Fink 1988, Hua Dok. II/1, pp. 130 and 132; Fink 1995, pp. 118 and 120). Importantly, he will temper the claim of his disciple by stating, in turn, that “the phenomenological activity belongs [...] to every human soul as a possibility” (Fink 1988, Hua Dok. II/1, p. 189). But what, then, is the specific relationship that Husserl acknowledges between the transcendental and the anthropological, which traces his median path between Fink’s insistence upon the dehumanization of the transcendental “I” and Heidegger’s emphasis on the worldly inscription of subjectivity<sup>26</sup>? Several texts from the 30s conceive of the relationship between transcendental subjectivity and the human person as a necessary “self-objectification” (*Selbstobjektivation* or *Selbstobjektivierung*). The 54th paragraph of the *Crisis of European Sciences* is eloquent in this respect: “each human being ‘bears within himself a transcendental I’ [...] insofar as he is the self-objectification, as exhibited through phenomenological self-reflection, of the corresponding transcendental ‘I’” (Husserl 1954, Hua VI,

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24 This is also suggested by the eloquent testimony of a letter to Georg Misch on the 3rd of August 1929: “I [...] understood phenomenology as a radical and universal ‘humanistic science,’ in a far more radical way than Dilthey did, due to the phenomenological reduction” (Husserl 1994a, Hua Dok. III-6, p. 277, quoted in Kisiel and Sheehan 2010, p. 397).

25 “*Das Anthropologieverbot ist dann die apotropäische Handlung, mit der die Position des transzendentalen Zuschauers verteidigt wird*” (Blumenberg 2006, p. 91).

26 See Husserl 1962, Hua IX, p. 274, footnote 1: “*Gehört nicht eine Welt überhaupt zum Wesen des reinen ego?*”, and the comments provided by John D. Scanlon (Scanlon 1972).

p. 190; Husserl 1970, p. 186). A research manuscript from 1931 expresses the same idea in monadological terminology:

The self-objectification of the total transcendental subjectivity [*Allsubjektivität*], as it exists in a transcendental intertwining [*Ineinander*], is realized in every transcendental monad [...]. In every monad, the individual self-objectification is a transcendental self-veiling [*Selbstverhüllung*]. (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 388)

How is this dynamic of self-objectification and self-veiling to be understood, insofar as it appears to be a remarkable expression of the entanglement between the transcendental and the anthropological? Suggestively, Husserl presents it as the tension between the finite and the infinite. The finite life of the human being is that in which “its transcendental being as a transcendental subjectivity remains veiled”, that in which “the transcendental subjectivity lives under the veil of its humanity [*in seiner Menschlichkeit die transzendente Subjektivität als verhüllte lebt*].” From this standpoint, “the human being is a finite being which has a constant consciousness of infinity [*Das menschliche Sein ist Sein in der Endlichkeit derart, dass es beständiges Sein im Bewusstsein der Unendlichkeit ist*]”, insofar as the unveiling of its transcendental dimension is necessarily possible for it (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 389). The finite life that the “I” leads as a human being is consequently a life that is most of the time hidden from itself, a life which is unaware of the infinite potentialities which are harbored within it. This limitation is one specific to the natural attitude, and Husserl will also speak of it in terms of “transcendental blindness [*Verblendung*]”, when writing that “[w]orldliness is a transcendental blindness which, prior to the transcendental reduction [...], makes the transcendental necessarily inaccessible” (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 389). Reading this statement, it becomes easier to comprehend what was meant in the 1931 conference by the assertion that, should the meaning of the reduction be misconstrued, everything would be misunderstood: without accomplishing the phenomenological reduction, the human being remains hidden to him- or herself and ignores the infinity that he or she contains as a transcendental being. Only through reduction can one become conscious of the fact that “the life of every transcendental I is the life of the finite within an infinity, a life which, so to speak, reflects itself into the veiling of human finitude and manifests itself into this very veiling” (Husserl 1973, Hua XV, p. 390). In other words, the human life is not simply that in which the transcendental is masked or veiled: it also manifests the transcendental; however, only the phenomenological attitude deployed through the phenomenological reduction can make it fully apparent and explicit.

As has become clear by now, Husserl’s phenomenology has not only not submitted itself to the “anthropological prohibition”, but can also hardly be accused of an “anthropological

indifference [*anthropologische Indifferenz*]” (Blumenberg 2006, p. 814). Rather, Husserl’s steadfast and patent intention is to reconquer the anthropological issue without abandoning the transcendental phenomenological perspective. This program corresponds precisely to the fine median path that is equally distinct from the rejection of the anthropological and from transcendental anthropologism. Even if such a path clearly does not meet Blumenberg’s expectations regarding a phenomenological anthropology (given that for him such an anthropology should “make evident the presuppositions of phenomenology as anthropological”, Blumenberg 2006, p. 167), it might not, after all, be lacking in interest.<sup>27</sup> The intention of my analysis has been precisely to show that the hazardous path of a transcendental anthropology, differently and yet jointly considered by Kant and Husserl, is neither fully aporetic nor disappointingly poor.

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<sup>27</sup> It is this path that Merleau-Ponty himself follows when, in his 1951-52 lecture on “Human Sciences and Phenomenology”, he assigns to his research the task of “reflecting upon this *transcendental human being*” (Merleau-Ponty 2001, p. 47).

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