

Action: Phenomenology of Wishing and Willing in Husserl and Heidegger

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“Everyone who actually wills knows: to actually will is to will nothing else but the ought of one’s existence” (Heidegger)

1. Introduction

The problem of distinguishing between willing and wishing and their significance for both the constitution of our consciousness as well as the constitution of our practical life runs all the way through the history of philosophy. Given the persuasiveness of the problem, it might be helpful to draw a sharp distinction between a *metaphysical* and a *psychological* or *phenomenological* approach to the problem. The first approach may be identified with the positions that Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche held, which involved an identification of *the will* with reality/actuality in general, and which Heidegger tried to analyze in his later writings on the basis of his confrontation with Nietzsche. In this paper, however, I will not consider the metaphysical approach to the distinction; rather, I will focus on the second approach to distinguishing wishing and willing, which was initiated by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, and of which as we will see soon – Husserl and the early Heidegger are ultimately still heirs. Hence I will begin my consideration by recalling briefly the main claim in Aristotle’s discovery of the central position of will within our life.

2. Prelude: Aristotle on Wishing and Willing

In Book III of his *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle discusses the distinction between wishing and willing. The general purpose of Book III is an attempt to give an account of deliberation and choice, since, according to Aristotle, the source of virtuous actions must be searched for in ourselves, which leads him to the conclusion that we

deliberate about something that is “up to us” (Aristotle 2002, 1111b). Within this context Aristotle introduces an important distinction, the main point of which is that willing acts, some of which are associated with deliberation and choice, are directed towards *means*, whereas wishing acts are directed towards the *ends* of our activities.¹ For example, we can *wish* to be healthy, but we cannot will or choose the end of health; rather, we *will* the means that are necessary to attain the wished end (see *ibid.*). For instance, we can deliberate about the question whether we should drink water or wine if we want to be healthy, but the end – in this case health or being healthy – is already presupposed for our deliberation. In addition to this, Aristotle discusses a list of things that reveal the essence of willing acts. He claims that willing acts *cannot* be concerned with the following seven types of things: (i) impossible things, (ii) “everlasting” things, such as mathematical truths (see Aristotle 2002, 1112b), (iii) laws of nature, such as the “rising of stars” (*ibid.*), (iv) events that happen by chance, (v) chaotic ever-changing occurrences, (vi) things that we cannot control, such as events in foreign countries, and finally, (vii) grammar. Aristotle comes to the conclusion that we do not *will* things that are beyond our control and our selves; rather, “we deliberate about things that are up to us and are matters of actions” (*ibid.*). In this connection, there are three important points that we have to keep in mind for our discussion of Husserl and Heidegger on the issue of wishing and willing: (i) Aristotle anticipates the basic distinction between theoretical and practical possibilities (which Husserl introduced and Heidegger takes over in *Being and Time*), the first of which are possibilities that are not related to their realization (modal possibility) and the second of which are possibilities that can be realized through and as actions (practical possibility); (ii) Aristotle points out that willing is tightly connected to our self and *center* of life, whereas wishing seems to be a secondary activity of the soul, from which finally (iii) it follows that the will is conceived as the more *important* and *higher* faculty than the faculty of wishing.² Later in this essay we will see that both Husserl and Heidegger take over, as well as deepen and transform Aristotle’s original insight. However, in the next part of my article I will turn to my focal topic, namely a consideration of wishing and willing, which is to say, of practical acts in Husserl and Heidegger.

3. Husserl: Wishing and Willing as Practical Intentionality

Practical Philosophy is present in Husserl’s phenomenology in four ways:³ (i) as explicit ethics as well as phenomenology of religion and

culture, which is developed in Husserl's Freiburger lectures and in the *Kaizo*-articles, (ii) as value theory, which we find developed in Husserl's early Goettingen lectures, (iii) as an analysis of practical acts, which is demonstrated in several manuscripts and finally, (iv) as the problem of how to find an appropriate way to the reduction and the epoché. It seems particularly important that we carefully differentiate between the last two ways, namely between (a) the *general* problem of whether phenomenology, and especially the idea of a reduction, is itself based in a practical act, which Husserl conceives in *First Philosophy* and in *Cartesian Meditations* as a radical *decision* of the philosopher, and (b) the *particular* problem of whether practical acts can be described as a sphere of their own, which might lead us to a concrete analysis of what could be properly called a *practical act*. Before I turn to a concrete analysis of wishing and willing, I would like to comment briefly on the general difficulty of characterizing the foundation of phenomenology itself as practical. Afterwards, I will give an overview of Husserl's main idea regarding the nature of wishing and willing.

4. Will and Reduction

The problem of how phenomenology can emerge in the individual's life as well as within the history of thinking is a central topic of debate for Husserl scholars, and as such it has been controversially discussed in phenomenological research for at least 50 years, having been intensified through the publication of Fink's *Sixth Cartesian Meditation* several years ago. However one might tend to solve the problem of how one can be *motivated* to perform the phenomenological reduction, given that this dimension is "hidden" within the natural attitude, one must admit that the initial emergence of transcendental phenomenology is conceived, as Husserl puts it in *Cartesian Meditations*, as a *radical* decision of the philosopher not only to strive towards truth but also to take *responsibility* for *every* step that is necessary to reach the goal of an absolute clarification of our world. Accordingly, every form of strategic thought, including, especially, *lying*, is alien to the phenomenologist (see Hua I, 44) once he/she has made the decision that *binds* his/her life. The fact that Husserl in *First Philosophy* roots this decision of "self-determination" (Hua VIII, 7) in an "absolute responsibility," which calls forth the underlying *task* of phenomenology itself, leads to the question of whether phenomenology *as such* has to be reformulated as an *ethical project* through which mankind in the long run fulfills its destiny. Husserl writes: "By

determining itself as a philosophical subject, the subject makes a decision, which is directed towards its whole future life of cognition (*Erkenntnisleben*)” (Hua VIII, 6).

In other words, the phenomenologist is *called* to the decision to perform the epoché as a categorically binding act, which is not just a decision to engage in radical theorizing; rather, it is a decision to *change one’s life* through theory, that is to say, to conceive phenomenology as a (religious) *vocation*. Accordingly, as Marcus Brainard puts it, the epoché is the “will to the ethical life” (Brainard 2001, 145). Through the “free original foundation” [*freie Urstiftung*] (Hua XXVII, 43) of the ethically transformed epoché, the phenomenologist gives up his/her former personality and becomes a “new and true human being” (Hua XXVII, 43). In short, radical philosophy becomes a “habitual form of life” (Hua VIII, 7) [*Lebensform*], in the sense that, phenomenology ultimately forms and shapes one’s *whole* life project. Given this surprising turn, one might consider reading Heidegger’s *Being and Time* as an answer to the question of how phenomenology *as such* is a practical task rather than a theoretical one, since Dasein’s resoluteness is not only the very condition for opening up the possibility of concrete decisions and actions (see Sections 60–62), but also – as Heidegger remarks in *Being and Time* – a precondition for an *authentic* mode of doing science and scientific research, for, according to Heidegger, “science has its origin in authentic existence” (BT, 415). The upshot this is that we are confronted with the task of thinking about a foundation of Husserl’s project through Heidegger’s philosophy. However, the need for a grounding of the beginning of philosophy need not to be considered as a project that is *external* to Husserl’s approach; rather, we can conclude that his analysis *internally* requires such a foundation. In other words, an analysis of what is practical in the beginning situation of the philosopher might only be realized through an existential analysis that uncovers the condition for the decision to philosophize. In other words, the phenomenologist must already live authentically if the decision for radical philosophy is to be *successful*. The phenomenologist who wants to become a radical philosopher must already know what it means *to be* responsible for every step of his/her scientific life. It seems to me that Husserl overlooks this dimension, especially because of his excessive and exaggerated attempts to find the appropriate method for accessing truth.

However, the solution to this complex problem cannot be given in this essay, though it should be kept in mind for the following considerations, since the analysis of willing acts can aid us in our attempt to understand the structure of decisions in general, and therefore the structure of the decision to practice philosophy in particular. For now

I would like to make good on my promise to give a *concrete* analysis of what it means to perform practical acts of wishing and willing.

5. Husserl's Division of Act Intentionality

Within the history of modern philosophy we can see that a significant number of discussions are based on the question of which faculty of reason or region of beings we should address as fundamental.⁴ Usually, we refer to reason or consciousness in a three-fold manner, namely as involving *objectifying* or theoretical reason, *ethical* reason, and *aesthetical* reason.⁵

Husserl differentiates between *theoretical* acts (which are called "objectifying acts"), *feeling* or valuing acts, and *practical* acts. The first refer to pure objects or entities, the second to values, and the third to purposes. It is important to note that "objectifying" does not mean "reflective," but expresses just the specific relation that consciousness has to entities. In addition, Husserl's theory is based on the assumption that every kind of consciousness is constituted through a "foundation" (*Fundierung*), which means that every act is founded upon other acts, and ultimately on basic sensible and categorical intuitions.⁶ All debates that are centered on the question about the constitution of our world through objectifying, feeling, and practical acts are based on a very simple question, namely, which kind of act or which kind of "directedness towards" the world should be described as the *fundamental* relation to the world. What is striking here is the fact that Husserl himself ran across the problem of accounting for the connection between objectifying and non-objectifying acts.⁷ Ultimately, his theory is based on the assumption that the kinds of non-objectifying acts, namely, feeling and acting, are *based* on objectifying acts.⁸ Before I am able to be directed towards an object in a feeling act, Husserl claims, I must encounter at least "something." This means that feeling acts are not originally directed towards their own objects but are founded (*fundiert*) in objectifying acts that present the object "as such" and are therefore prior to them. Without intuitive givenness of at least "something," feeling acts would be directed, so to speak, to "nothing."⁹

6. Will as Practical Intentionality

As is well known, Scheler among others claimed that because non-objectifying acts are not related towards being or entities, they must

be conceived as *prior* to every objectifying relation of consciousness to its objects. Values and purposes *make it possible*, according to Scheler, for things to be given in certain value shadings, about which I must already be aware in order to turn my attention to things. For instance, Scheler would argue that I must already be aware of a positive value of food *before* I can be attracted and “pulled” by an object that looks “like food.”¹⁰ However, Husserl’s assumption that explicit intentionality is always intentionality *of something* does not allow for a radical change of the problem, especially since this assumption requires a basic and fundamental relation of consciousness to being, which must be conceived as prior to every other part of our experiences. For as I stated before, according to Husserl I must in principle will and feel *something*, which presupposes the constitution of *something* (being, existence) through positing intentionality.

However, Husserl eventually became aware, especially in his manuscripts that he wrote on willing acts, that the sense of “something” ultimately is not the same in practical acts and objectifying acts; for we must put into question whether the object of practical acts can be identified as entities. In other words, we must ask whether the “something” towards which consciousness is directed, must be analyzed as a *qualified* entity. At this point an example might be helpful. Let us assume that when we eat dinner we are directed towards our object, which is in this case the meal on our plates. Our general interest, which we call “eating a dinner,” is basically a combination of three components: (i) I must be directed towards something, namely the being of the meal, which might either be given in an imagination, a recollection, or a perception. I do not have to sit in front of a meal, I also might anticipate (imagine) the being of the meal, I might remember a former meal, or it might indeed be the case that I have *right now* a bodily mediated relation to the meal; (ii) I must be directed towards the *good* or *bad* taste of the dinner, which also might be given in acts of imagination, recollection, or perception. We should be compelled to ask ourselves at this point if we are directed towards the *good* or *bad* quality in the same way as we are directed towards the “existence” of the meal. Upon a minimal reflection, we soon realize that the good or bad quality must be given differently than the meal’s existence is given, namely in (unfulfilled) *desire* towards the expected satisfaction and fulfillment of the *desired* quality. Desire, according to Husserl’s distinctions, must be described as a type of feeling intentionality and thus it becomes immediately clear that my interest, which constitutes the situation that we called “eating a dinner,” has several act components that must be differentiated in a careful analysis; [iii] according to Husserl, our analysis requires that we take into account

an additional component, namely my will, which constitutes and regulates the *continuous* performance of my acts and the movements of my body. In other words, we are *acting* continuously, which renders it possible that everything is coordinated and does not break down. Likewise, action or practical acts cannot be directed towards the being of the dinner; rather, the continuity of our actions is possible *through* purposes as well as *directed towards* purposes, namely, in this case the end of my hunger (and in the long run the self-perseverance of my life). To sum up the analysis of this example, we must take into account four aspects of “eating a dinner:” (i) it is *something* that we eat, which is given in perception, (ii) it has positive or negative qualities, which are given in desire, (iii) it has a purpose, which is given in my will, all of which are (iv) united through my *interest* in eating dinner, which constitutes the *topic* of my acts (= “eating dinner”).

Husserl realizes that his assumption that practical acts and objectifying acts are directed to *the same* object of reference is impossible; rather, they must be conceived as being different (which does *not* mean that they are conceived as two different things, i.e. values and beings). For otherwise the distinction between purpose and being, as well as the distinction between value and being, could no longer be made. This consideration forces Husserl to rethink their relation *without* giving up the thesis that objectifying acts must be conceived as prior to the constitution of values and purposes of consciousness. The solution that Husserl proposes is simply this: practical acts must be conceived as *analogous* to positing acts. But what exactly does this mean? In *Ideas I* Husserl introduces the term “*Urdoxa*” (Hua III/1, Section 104), which refers to the fact that the relation that constitutes consciousness is always a relation between cogito *and* cogitatum, the positing of which can change depending on the mode in which someone conceives an object. For instance, an object is not only given in a belief, within which one conceives the object as really existent, but also in different modes, such as doubts, questions or assumptions. When someone doubts that an object is in front of her, then she still perceives an object (the *Urdoxa* is in play), but she perceives the object *as* object in a different way, that is to say, the object’s noematic features change with the change of *how* she perceives the object. Husserl calls these transformations of the relation between cogito and cogitatum “modalizations.” Consequently, if it is indeed the case, as Husserl maintains, that every act-intentionality is founded upon objectifying acts, then it follows that non-objectifying acts such as practical acts must be conceived in a similar way, which is to say that they can be modalized throughout experience. Husserl gives several examples in which a will (which posits its object) can be transformed

into a “doubting” will. As an illustration, let us take the assumption that one opens the window and perceives an “object” being on the street. The perception in this moment is characterized by a simple belief that is directed towards the “perceived something” on the street. Moreover, let us assume that suddenly the objects moves, the consequence of which might be that one begins to doubt whether it is really an object or whether it should be conceived as a person. As a result, the perceived object *as* perceived object changes and is transformed, since one is now aware of a *doubted* object, which will – if one realizes that it is a person but not a mere thing – be transformed back into a certain belief. However this might be, one might furthermore begin to ask why this person is on the street and whether it might be necessary to walk down and check out the situation. In this case, one’s consciousness (relation between *cogito* and *cogitatum*) is no longer characterized by a mere belief or a doubt; rather, the relation of someone’s *will* to its object is modified into a doubt. That is, one does not cognitively doubt the existence of the object; rather, according to Husserl, in this moment someone doubts the *purpose* of an action, or, in other words, one doubts whether one should walk down and check out the person.¹¹ Accordingly, the referent of the act is still doubted, but is no longer an *entity*; rather, it is a *purpose*. This purpose is not perceived, but is conscious *in* or given *in addition* to the perceived object. The conscious relation is clearly dependent on the perceived object, but the *doubting* consciousness refers to a *different* object, that is to say, not to the object as perceived. To sum up, *in regard to its modalization and modification*, the non-objectifying act is dependent on the objectifying act, but *in regard to their (ideal) referents* they are different.

In this context Husserl introduces the distinction between wishing and willing, the difference of which is, according to Husserl, absolute. He writes: “The mere wishing does not contain willing, it does not contain practical modalities and it is not a practical act, that is, a willing act in the broadest sense.” (Hua XXVIII, 103)

What is the criterion that Husserl introduces for this distinction? In short, he claims that the difference between wishing and willing is not dependent on their modalizations, that is to say, wishing can not be conceived as a modification of a willing act. For instance, according to him we are unable to understand a wishing act either as a doubting or as an assuming will; rather, he maintains that both wishing and willing have to do with how an object’s *possibility* is conceived. Whereas willing acts and their modifications are positing acts, wishing acts are the merely opposite, namely non-positing acts. Husserl’s claim is that while one performs a wishing act the awareness of the

wished object *excludes* the possibility that the wished object can be realized, whereas in willing acts the willed object is consciously given as something that can (and should) be realized through action. This ultimately reminds us of Aristotle's distinction between the objects of wishing and willing.¹²

This distinction is crucial, since in our everyday use of these terms we usually understand them differently. For instance, someone might claim that she *wants* to stop smoking. Strictly speaking, we must conclude that if this person does not stop smoking immediately, she does *not* really have the will to stop smoking, and that she rather only *wishes* to stop smoking. According to this analysis, the goal – to stop smoking – is given as something that does not refer to its possible realization, but to an *open and neutral possibility*; and therefore it does not lead to action. In a wishing act, we might say, we are unable to find a moment of striving towards the possibility, which would transform the possibility into a realizable one; rather, in wishing one has a totally *impractical* relation to the wished object, so that this wished object could be one of the wished objects that Aristotle lists in *Nicomachean Ethics* (see my comments above). For instance, I can wish not to be born, the wished object of which (noema) is given as a *mere* possibility, that is to say, as a *cognitive* possibility that can *never* be realized. Consequently, because phenomenology must take into account the a priori relation between act and object, even when I wish to stop smoking the wished is given as a mere open possibility and therefore as something that (at least in the present moment) does not become reality.¹³ In other words, the difference between wishing and willing is closely tied to the question of how the *possibility* of an object is present in someone's consciousness of that object, which ultimately forces us to conclude that both *wishing and willing must primarily be understood as consciousness of two different types of possibilities*, namely either *modal (theoretical)* or *practical*. I will return to this point after having introduced Heidegger's transformation of the distinction between wishing and willing, to which I turn now my attention.

7. Heidegger: Wishing and Willing as Constitution of the Practical Self

We will see that Heidegger basically combines two things, as he ties together Husserl's discussion of the difference between modal and practical possibilities with the idea that both types of possibilities not only express a relation that the self has to itself, but also an understanding of self as either wishing or willing. In

other words, in Heidegger's theory wishing and willing are not acts that are directed towards something that the ego or self *is not* (things); rather, wishing and willing are acts that have to do with what the self *is*. Put simply, *in wishing and willing the self deals with itself*. As is well known, the understanding and activity of the self, according to Heidegger, must be conceived as either authentic or inauthentic.¹⁴ It should become immediately clear how these two possibilities hang together with wishing and willing. Wishing is the very mode of the self in which the self inauthentically understands itself and, on the contrary, willing is the mode through which the self becomes *itself*, which is to say, becomes authentic. In what follows, I would like to explain first Heidegger's transformation of Husserl's distinction between theoretical and practical possibilities and second, its relation to the main difference that Heidegger presents in *Being and Time*, namely the difference between *eigentlich* and *uneigentlich*.

8. Husserl's Distinction between Logical and Practical Possibilities

The distinction between theoretical and practical possibilities is not only discussed by Husserl's lectures on value theory, it is also discussed in *Ideas II*.¹⁵ Since the distinction is important for one of Heidegger's main ideas in *Being and Time* (*eigentlich/uneigentlich*), I shall offer a detailed explanation of the difference between these two possibilities. In §60 of *Ideas II* Husserl differentiates between (*doxic*) *logical possibilities* and *practical possibilities*, both of which are closely connected to what he calls the "I can," which he offers as a part of his analysis of human faculties. In short, logical possibilities are opposed to practical possibilities, since the former do not include the awareness of *an activity to which the possibility is related*. I shall briefly clarify this further development of the problem by giving an example. If someone claims that he/she wants to stop smoking we have two possibilities for understanding this claim: either (a) the person conceives the possibility of stopping smoking as an event that happens or does not happen, or (b) the person understands the possibility as a "can," the latter of which means that the claim is tied to a horizon of "practical intentions" (Hua IV, 257). Practical intentions are connected to one's will and, as Husserl remarks, they therefore appear as objects of decisions (Hua IV, 258), whereas logical possibilities are "mere possibilities out of intuitive ideas (*Vorstellung*)" (Hua IV, 261), which are *not* abilities of a person and are *not* given in activities.¹⁶

By referring back to our consideration of wishing and willing we can conclude that the difference between them is conceived, according to Husserl's theory, as a difference of how we are related to possible objects, namely either (a) to something that without any tendency *is or is not* the case (wishing), or (b) to something that *can be* the case, the latter of which is connected to *action*.

9. Authenticity as Attitude Towards the Self as Practical Possibility

Surprisingly, Heidegger implicitly refers to the distinction between logical and practical possibilities in *Being and Time*. In a central passage, Heidegger writes: "Dasein *is* its possibility, and it 'has' this possibility, but not just as a property [*eigenschaftlich*], as something present-at-hand would" (BT, 68). What Heidegger has in mind here is the distinction between something that *has* possibilities (logical possibilities) and something that *is* its possibility (practical possibility). Put simply, on the one hand, we can understand possibilities of our own existence as something that *might* happen. On the other hand, we can understand ourselves as "entities" that create our own possibilities *through* acts of self-understanding, that is to say, we understand possibilities of our own existence as something that *can* happen.¹⁷

If I think that the possibility of stopping smoking belongs to me as a characteristic or property that belongs to a thing, then I do *not* cognize this as an *actual* possibility. Something that belongs to me in a modal or categorical sense, such as a property, could also *not be*. For instance, when I say "I *could* stop smoking," then I conceive the possibility of stopping smoking as something that could also *not be*. In other words, it is an *open possibility* whether I will or will not stop smoking. To conceive the possibility in this way is to conceive it *categorically*, since, in this case, the possibility is (i) not dependent on my *present* being, but (ii) dependent on *external future* conditions, over which I have no (or limited) control. Alternatively, if I think that the possibility of stopping smoking belongs to me as an *ability to be*, then I understand this possibility as an *actual* possibility of *myself* and my *present* being. In other words, I realize that the *future* possibility is part of my *present* and that it does not have a merely categorical or modal sense. Furthermore, if I understand that my possibilities *are already* part of my present situation, that is to say, if I do not simply take future possibilities into account, then I am indeed, as Heidegger claims, resolute, because I understand that *my* possibilities are not tomorrow, but *now*, characterizing my very ability to be.¹⁸

We can see that Heidegger transforms Husserl's distinction between logical and practical possibilities in such a way that both concepts of possibilities are shifted towards the question of *how the self relates (understands) itself*, namely either authentically or inauthentically, whereas Husserl does not conceive wishing and willing as two modes of *self-understanding*. After having clarified this development, I can now conclude by considering Heidegger's identification of both possibilities with wishing and willing. In section 41 of *Being and Time*, in which Heidegger introduces the concept of care (which is the condition for the distinction between wishing and willing), he remarks that Dasein usually understands its own existence through the "dimming down of the possible as such" (BT, 239), since everyday Dasein understands its own existence out of the world and out of things. "From this world," as Heidegger puts it, "it takes its possibilities, and it does so first in accordance with the way things have been interpreted by the 'they'" (BT, 239), so that, he concludes, "the average everydayness of concern becomes blind to its possibilities" and "no new possibilities are willed" (BT, 239). In other words, usually in its average life the self understands its own being in terms of logical possibilities through which it conceives itself as an entity that possesses possibilities similar to how things have properties. Accordingly, Heidegger finally states that inauthentic understanding "shows itself for the most part as mere *wishing*" (BT, 239). Inauthentic Dasein *wishes to be* in certain ways, but in such an understanding it understands its ownmost possibilities and thus itself as something that is only a logical possibility and is not related to its activity, that is to say, to its actions. Put simply, as a wishing being Dasein understands its ability-to-be as something that cannot be realized and is not rooted in actions. In wishing, Dasein does not act, and one might add, is not resolute. A "wish-world" is a world in which practical possibilities as possibilities that can be realized are closed off, since, in Heidegger's words, wishing is "*hankering after possibilities*" (BT, 240), the consequence of which is that Dasein's true being *as* true being becomes concealed.

10. Conclusion: The Will and the Radical Decision to be a Philosopher

Finally, I would like to turn back to the problem of how the decision to do philosophy as phenomenology might be reconsidered in light of our analysis of wishing and willing. If we agree with Husserl's and Heidegger's conception of the difference between logical and practical possibilities, then we can see that someone who wants to become a radical philosopher in the Husserlian sense must conceive the

possibility of phenomenology (i) as a practical possibility and (ii) as a possibility that is related to how one understands one's own being.¹⁹ In other words, at least one presupposition for becoming a transcendental Husserlian philosopher – if we take Husserl at his word – is that the resolution to be a philosopher must *change one's life as a whole*, since the philosopher subjects herself to truth. The main characteristic of this resolution is that in the long run, phenomenology makes one's life, as Husserl puts it in the *Crisis*, *blessed* because the essence of being human becomes through phenomenology and philosophy a “being as vocation for a life in apodicticity” (Hua VI, 275).²⁰ The decision for phenomenology, according to Husserl, renews one's life and makes it *pure*.²¹

Faced with these radical possibilities, we might have to conclude with a skeptical outlook: If the decision to do transcendental phenomenology is really what Husserl thinks it is, then we might consider whether transcendental phenomenology can actually be willed, or whether it is something that can actually only be wished for.

Notes

1. I cannot go into detail here. According to Aristotle, there are certain willing acts that are not chosen, although all chosen acts are willing act.
2. For a general account of the connection between Aristotelianism and Phenomenology, see Drummond (2002b).
3. For a general overview of the concept of practical intentionality see Lee 2000, for an detailed study of Husserl's ethical thinking see Sepp (1997).
4. For a general overview of the problematic of the division of acts see Melle (1988) and Melle (1990).
5. We can draw these distinctions, for instance, from Kant's theory but also from Habermas' theory of different argumentative discourses. Because of a crucial change introduced by Herbart in his *Lehrbuch* in the middle of the 19th century, modern phenomenology took over Kant's distinctions, though in a slightly modified manner. Herbart introduces the concept of value, which is connected to the emotional and aesthetical sphere. For a general overview of the problem see Melle (1988) and Melle (1990).
6. Husserl never thought about what Heidegger in *Being and Time* called “equiprimordiality” (*Gleichursprünglichkeit*), namely an original level of equal importance regarding different modes of being-in-the-world.
7. Husserl's theory of reason and the differentiations between types of acts are based on Brentano's theory (see Melle 1990).
8. In many manuscripts Husserl struggled with his own claims, especially in his lectures on value theory in the first decade of the last century. See, for instance, Hua XXXVIII, 253 pp. For an overview of Husserl's considerations concerning value theory, see Schuhmann (1991); concerning value theory and ethics see Melle (1990, 1991).

9. See for an overview of the foundation of acts in this context Drummond (2002b, 17–20), see also Drummond (1995), Crowell (1995, 52–55).
10. I have elsewhere shown that in his E-manuscripts Husserl defends a similar thesis; see Lotz (2001). For a short overview of the problem posed by Scheler, see also Drummond (2002a, 9).
11. For Husserl's discussion of will and doubt see Hua XXVIII, 112–119.
12. For a general discussion of Husserl's phenomenology of will, see Melle (1997), Mertens (1998), and Nenon (1990).
13. From this follows another interesting analogy, which Husserl does not mention, namely, the analogy of wishing and imagination.
14. Heidegger mentions a third "neutral" mode, the extreme sides of which are inauthentic and authentic.
15. Heidegger scholarship still notoriously overlooks the implicit influence of Husserlian terms on Heidegger's *Being and Time*.
16. For an overview of these distinction within the context of the "I can" see Aguirre (1991).
17. For a forceful and clear examination of this difference see Blattner (1996) and Blattner (1992).
18. Heidegger develops the distinction between the different concepts of possibility in section 31 of *Being and Time*.
19. At the beginning of the Crisis Husserl states: "the practical possibility of a new philosophy will prove itself: through its realization" (Hua VI, 17; Husserl 1970, 18), the irony of which is that Husserl might be the only transcendental phenomenologist who ever existed, especially since he is the only one who "has lived in all its seriousness the fate of a philosophical existence" (Hua - VI, 17; Husserl 1970, 18). For the connection of fate and vocation see Brainard (2001).
20. Brainard puts it differently: "The resolution is the subject's first radical act of conscience, his first acknowledgment of duty. Out of love for the best, it is the conscious and conscientious decision to live wholly in accordance with the duty prescribed by the supreme value, and not as inclination dictates. For Husserl there can be no continuum between old and new. Only the new may remain" (Brainard 2001, 130).
21. For an interpretation of renewal as a form of practical remembering see my contribution in Lotz (2002).

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