***Amor Mundi* as Capability to Transcend: Hannah Arendt's Conception of the Human**

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Thank you for reading and reflecting on my draft paper!

Abstract: The paper aims at offering a phenomenological interpretation of the idea of 'transcendence' (as human capability) by reconceptualizing Hannah Arendt's rather vague notion of *amor mundi* (worldly love). Firstly, I show the paradoxical tension of *amor mundi* within her own writings. Then, I trace the origin of the problematic of love of the world from her doctoral dissertation (Arendt's critic of Augustine's 'neighbor love') by using Heidegger's phenomenological method. Finally, I explicate a phenomenological approach toward *amor mundi* as human capability to transcend (regarding how 'love' and 'world' are presentable as 'experience' and 'capability') by further analyzing the distinction between 'ontological' claim and 'political' claim (regarding the human): the world which humans build and sustain together is to be shared, but that first-hand experience of the world is not particularly demonstrable or sharable.

Key words: *amor mundi*, Arendt, Heidegger, transcendence, phenomenology, the human

Introduction

The paper aims at offering a phenomenological interpretation of the idea of 'transcendence' (as human capability) by reconceptualizing Hannah Arendt's rather vague notion of *amor mundi*.

The significance of the phenomenological conception of the human, in Arendt, is that this way of understanding helps us distinguish human life—between birth and death—as worldly events that constitute the space of appearances, from that of the earthly ever-recurring cycle of nature. To interrupt the cycle, as a way of transcending, human beings erect a world upon the earth and take care of it by means of human activities such as the capacity of building and caring: labour, work and action. Every act, seen not from the perspective of the agent but the process, appears as a miracle, an interruption of an automatic unstoppable cosmic movement (BPF, 150). But "to act is to err, to go astray" (LM, 184-194), so to some extent, erring also names the inherent characteristics of humans who act with uncertainty (unpredictable and irreversible) and frailty. Equally dangerous, the human capacity to act in modern science – to begin anew and end uncertainly – can push us into an irreversible and irremediable "process of no return" (HC, 231-2).

I look to Hannah Arendt's concept of *amor mundi* (love of the world) to further explore the world-building/caring capacities of human beings who are constitutively prone to error (they falter and stumble). This is significant as love leads back to the question of the nobodyness ('Why is there anybody rather than nobody?') as a quintessential question of the human condition ('What does it mean to be human?') in Arendt's political thinking when she claimed that: "He who does not love and desire at all is a nobody" (LA, 20). In view of this, I look to *amor mundi* to examine Arendt's account of the loving capability for two reasons. First, love is only 'worldly' when it "rests on being of the world (*de mundo*)". Second, only through loving the world can human beings explicitly be "at home in the world" (LA, 67).

To tackle with this interpretive goal, certain theoretical puzzles are to be dealt with within Arendt's idiosyncratic thought. Firstly, the translation of amor mundi is a contradiction in terms: insofar as, "love, in its very nature, is unworldly," Arendt sometimes suggests it as anti-political (HC 242). So, theoretically, to what extent is worldly love even possible for us to comprehend? Adding to the complexity, how do we interpret Arendt's rather 'personal' message about love: "the only kind of love" acknowledged is the love toward persons, rather than any collective groups or people? (JW, 466-467) Further, to what extent is *amor mundi* meaningful and achievable in a political and social context? Finally, how do we justify Arendt's eulogy that love is "a power of the universe, insofar the universe is alive." (DTB 372)

In response to these interpretive difficulties, I shall demonstrate that love transcends by way of human experiences and human capability. On the one hand, as exquisitely rare experiences of love, different people have different feelings and different ways of presenting the intricacy and subtlety of loving feelings. (Artists, farmers and politicians must have different ways of expressing and demonstrating similar impulses, sensations or even commitment in loving moments.) Thus, by loving their beloved ones, human beings can *carry across* (transcend) the invisible and the metaphysically indemonstrable into something which *can* be but does not necessarily *need* to be, demonstrated or visualized with metaphors. On the other hand, as an exclusively world-building capability, love has the power to *carry over* (transcend) the earthly finitude of human existence, by natality, freedom, forgiving and promising.

In view of this, love is a 'power' rather than a 'feeling' or 'romance' (DTB, 372) (Schoonheim, 2018) because love "possesses an unequaled power of self-revelation and an unequalled clarity of vision for the disclosure of *who*" regardless of what "qualities and shortcomings, achievements, failings and transgressions" the beloved person might have (DTB, 372). Both the experience and the capability of love are existentially and ontologically rooted within human existence as the capacity to world and transcend, and both logically and constitutively entail particular cognitive boundaries or essential fences over which human beings are granted access to carry across or carry over.

To arrive at my interpretive goal, structurally, firstly, I show the paradoxical tension of *amor mundi* within her own writings, and show the importance of (drawing) boundaries which enclose lovers within a common ground whilst separating them apart from others. Then, I trace the origin of the problematic of love of the world from her 1929 doctoral dissertation (Arendt's critic of Augustine's 'neighbor love') by using Heidegger's phenomenological method. Finally, I explicate a phenomenological approach toward *amor mundi* as human capability to transcend (regarding how 'love' and 'world' are presentable as 'experience' and 'capability') by further analyzing the distinction between 'ontological' claim and 'political' claim (regarding the human): the world which humans build and sustain together is to be shared, but that first-hand experience of the world is not particularly demonstrable or sharable. Key in Arendt's political writing is, the way in which the faculty of freedom comes out of hiding and makes its appearance in the world is through creating its own worldly space, by establishing new boundaries, or admitting and defending established ones.

Worldly love as paradoxical tension

As Roger Berkowitz pointed out that Arendt's *amor mundi* does not designate "uncritical acceptance nor contemptuous rejection" but "unwavering facing up to and comprehending" what is going on as it is. (Berkowitz, 2017) The ontological dimension of the notion of *amor mundi* as worldly love is well-accepted as a key feature of Arendt's political thinking. (Bernauer, 2012, Benhabib, 1996, Maier-Katkin, 2010, Chiba, 1995, Young-Bruehl and Arendt, 2004) Some examined love as a human capacity, to distinguish a specific 'who', instead of 'what' somebody is, with which we are born, rather than one of those 'political virtues'. (Tamboukou, 2013, Nye, 2013) Others realised and demonstrated the conceptual tension of Arendt's notion of love of the world either as "a *fort-da* movement" or a "struggle" between a withdrawal from and a return to the world. (Tamboukou, 2013, Barthold, 2000) From a phenomenological perspective, however, the gist of the tension of *amor mundi* lies in the fact that the world which we humans build and sustain together is to be shared, but the first-hand experience of the world is not that demonstrable or sharable, as Michaele Ferguson suggested. (Ferguson, 2012)

Building on existing scholarship on Arendt's conception of love, I draw attention to an often-overlooked aspect of *amor mundi*; it is human beings who are capable of loving the world by way of transcending. What exactly human beings are transcending? The answer, I propose, is their own finite existence, or, what Heidegger called the "hermeneutic facticity", which means both being mortal and being cognitively limited. Here, I distinguish two different claims regarding human capacity for transcendence: the ontological claims and the political claims. The ontological claim highlights the often-overlooked aspect, i.e., the borderline experiences that trigger the human capacity of thinking and speaking that characterize human from other species. The political claim explores what human beings should do and how we

should organize our societies, involving human activities engaged in pursuing a potential immortality on earth. The two claims are closely related. The ontological claim determines what it is to be a human being, which provides the ground or bottom line for making more normative claims about how we should conduct politics in order to preserve and protect the desirable aspects of our human existence which is grounded on experience. Both claims were important for Arendt. Since, human beings not only transcend a kind of 'mere animality' through speech and language, but also transcend the limits of finite lives by creating a shared history. I therefore argue that in order to bring together the ontological claim regarding the transcendental dimension of human existence with politics is not transgressing but rather promising and meaningful because politics confronts the basic error which philosophy ignores.

The distinction between the ontological and political claims about love was only hinted at by Arendt, I believe. In the following, I shall primarily analyse two occasions on which Arendt explicitly discussed relevant topics: comments made in *The Human Condition*, and her response in the Gaus interview.

To begin with, love is as unworldly as it is unpolitical. As Arendt wrote,

> Love, by its very nature, is unworldly, and it is for this reason rather than its rarity that it is not only apolitical but antipolitical, perhaps the most powerful of all antipolitical human forces. (HC, 242)

Here, as the conceptual analysis and textual evidence show, *amor mundi* is a contradiction in terms. Arendt gave a hint about love's two-fold nature: rarity and a "powerful antipolitical human force". The rarity of love is an "indispensable experience" given birth by poets, who are capable of distilling the essence of rare experiences of love into poetry. As a rare human experience, love is felt but is difficult to articulate: it is unspeakable, impenetrable, unpredictable and uncontrollable, but as human capability, love may be the very secret of human history. This is why, according to Arendt, we are fooled by poets who mistakenly transform the rarity of love as experiences and capabilities into plainly universal 'romance' (HC, 242: n.81). In excluding the rarity of the love experience from love as powerful force, however, Arendt left the latter characteristic unexplained.

The other textual evidence in which Arendt gave her concern for the logical impossibility of *amor mundi* appeared in her response given in an interview with Gunther Gaus to defend her controversial claim: that her love is only toward persons and her friends, rather than to any collective groups. In other words, the only love which she admitted and believed in was the 'love of persons' (JW, 466-467). Gaus worried that detaching from any collective group to some extent means renouncing any political commitment and standpoint for further political activities, needless to say any political duty or rights to petition. As a response, Arendt spoke of two levels of belonging. The first sense of belonging, she said, is a natural condition by birth as always; the second is to join or form an organization which "has to do with a relation

to the world" (EU, 17). To put love into an oath or swear love towards a group, particularly because you are born or raised this way, was apolitical and worldless, even disastrous, for Arendt (EU, 17). However, authentic love only exists "when it is freed from every binding goal and every worldly fixation". (Arendt, 2007) :19 Arendt claimed that love for a person or friend is real whereas love for group is fake and fatal.

As discussed above, in the first instance, rarity and force refer respectively to love's ontological and political dimensions, whilst in the second, it seems that in the Gaus interview, Arendt was forced to make the distinction between the ontological and political dimensions of love through her analysis of the two levels of belonging. To better understand this implicit distinction, I turn to Arendt's reading of Lessing. Arendt developed a similar insight by describing Lessing as someone who "wanted to be friends of many men, but no man's brother" (MDT, 30). I belong to particular nationality, ethnicity or gender group because I was born this way. The indelible mark is the origin of my own existence, for which I am thankful. But those birth-given characteristics do not condition absolutely the potentiality (capacity) with which I am also born. Likewise, Arendt insisted that,

> "To be a Jew, to be a woman, belongs for me to the indisputable facts of my life … what has been given and not made … *physei* and not *nomoi*" (JW, 466).

To be born as a German Jew and female is never a reflective problem of identity, but the *Umwelt* I was born with and the *Es weltet* I comport myself around. (Cassin, 2016) In this regard, I argue that boundaries are necessary to sustain the tension within *amor mundi* because love is a relational term.(Burnell, 2005)

Yet, relation-establishing must be conditioned by distinctness. Without distinctness, there is no need and no access to establish relationships between people except by embracing repetition and sameness. Seeing this, Georg Simmel drew a radical yet vivid picture for us to comprehend the insurmountable boundaries. He said that "modern love is the first to recognize that there is something unattainable in the other" because the walls erected between two human beings seem impenetrable even to those with the "most passionate willing" (Boym, 2009).[1] The invisible, impenetrable and unbreakable walls stop even the most resolute soul from obtaining and the erection of the walls illustrates the absoluteness of modern love which is always bounded.

Boundaries demonstrate a strife or rift which does not designate a sense of a rupture or a gap but, in Heidegger's sense, an "intimacy' with which opponents belong to each other (OWA, 188). The boundaries carry the "opponents into

[1] Original appeared at Georg Simmel's, 'Eros Platonic and Modern' in *On Individuality and Social Forms*. Donald Levine (ed.) University of Chicago Press, 1971: 245-46.

provenance of their unity" by virtue of a common ground. By drawing the boundaries, the rift does not break the opponents apart but brings them into measuring, drawing and sharing a common frontier line. As Heidegger wrote,

> "This rift carries the opponents into the provenance of their unity by virtue of their common ground. It is a basic design, an outline sketch, that draws the basic features of the upsurgence of the clearing of beings. This rift does not let the opponents break apart; it brings what opposes measure and boundary into its common outline." (OWA, 188)

Interestingly, with the same root as 'rift', *riss* also means writing and drawing. In Heidegger's language, art has the capacity to produce by wrestling with and creating from the concealed/muted nature, to "draw out the *rift* and to draw the design with the drawing pen on the drawing board" (OWA, 195). With intimacy between rival parties, the strife brings them onto common ground upon which the opponents can draw a common outline based on each other's sketch (OWA, 188).

Even so, boundaries are never fixed and unchanging. As I see it, the world is always changing and renewing itself; and the changing world is accountable for the existence of boundaries. Humans, as mortal beings who are nevertheless capable of contemplating immortality and eternity, are inclined to retain their love for as long as possible, or they change their mind whilst the world stays the same. An eternal reference is so tempting that they forget that the boundaries are derived from the paradoxical tension between love and world. They are so attracted by the world just because it never stays as yesterday and they are attracted by the lovers of the world just because of the existence of various boundaries, the cognitive, linguistic, factual or metaphorical differences which set people apart and yet relate them together. The human affairs are the sources of the renewing world and the renewing world is the reason why we are attracted to others. In an anticipatory mood, I expect people to show up the same as yesterday, but maybe with a new outlook, unpredictable actions and improvised responses. In other words, we expect contingency. In this regard, according to Jackson, we must fully recognize the human as eventful of being. Being eventful, human interaction "overflows, confounds and goes beyond the forms that initially frame the interaction as well as the reflections and rationalizations that follow from it". Expecting the human being to be an eventful being, Jackson proposed a "migrant imagination" which forces us to realize a rather painful truth: that "the human world constitutes our common ground, our shared heritage, not as a place of comfortably consistent unity but as a site of contingency, difference and struggle".(Jackson, 2009) The conceptual impetus and source which cultivate a sense of natural human love for the world and for other human beings, whether we know them personally or not (Allison, 2017), constitutes the essential ingredient of *amor mundi* – we like to know people who are "different, diversified and heterogeneous"(Chiba, 1995)

Arendt endorsed the distinction "between human beings as objects of scientific inquiry and as free, contingent, noninterchangeable selves" (EU, 439). This is the core, I think, of Arendt's lifetime pursuit of a love of the world: to fully understand the world as a site of contingency, difference and struggle: not in a negative sense as a painful truth to admit and accept; but an enjoyment of flamboyant attractions which arouse our inner curiosity to see the world as we travel around, getting to know people and loving them by recognizing the boundaries which both separate us from and relate us to our neighbours.

But how can we visibly share and demonstrate the boundaries which indicate the outlines of the invisible web of human affairs? Here, I look to a phenomenological solution, particularly Heidegger's notion of loving in the light of erring. In Heidegger's words, 'erring' means to overlook the mystery and pass by: "Man's flight from the mystery toward what is readily available, onward from one current thing to the next, passing the mystery by – this is erring." (BW, 135) The *factum* of the finitude of human knowledge is not limited to deficiencies such as instability, imprecision and (the potentiality of) making errors, but to metaphysical categorical thinking which has blocked the cognitive and linguistic accessibility of the 'mystery' as "a place from which we arise and disappear". Dana Villa related Heidegger's phenomenological perspective on erring (as man's flight from or passing the mystery) with Arendt's notion of 'privacy' (as the hiddenness or darkness impenetrable by human knowledge).(Villa, 1995) pp. 146-7. To err is to pass by the mystery and to treat the world not as a dwelling place but as a transition. For Heidegger, just as in Christianity the lover is defined by his objects, then the human being, the lover of the world, is not of this world as long as the world is treated only as a transitionary passage to the beyond (LH, 224).

Using the phenomenological gaze, through rare moments of erring, such as mistakenly stumbling across the boundaries, from a phenomenologist's view, the error is the ignorance of the perceivably invisible and intangible: those ineffable boundaries which exist within the web of human relationships. For Arendt, the error became theoretically manifest in all modern materialism which tends to overlook the inevitability that human beings use metaphysics, its categorical languages and logic, as a way of thinking to guide their thought and disclose themselves in the web of human relationship, as "distinct and unique persons" (HC, 183). The manifestation of error corresponds to Arendt's critique of the materialistic ignorance of the intrinsic ineffability within human relationships, as well as human experiences. But such erring does not necessarily mean that we have to jump into the contemplative tradition and dwell in it as philosophy does. Instead, I believe, Arendt pictured the world as the transcendental horizon which allows human beings to testify and confirm their own existence through error.

For Arendt, erring, as the decisive mark of all human history, accompanies the presence of human Dasein between birth and death (LM, I:190). "To act is to err, to

go astray". Inspired by Heidegger's interpretation of guilt, Arendt offered a similar insight into the uncertain characteristics of human action. Not knowing the consequences of our actions, we always become guilty of the disastrous and unexpected consequences which we never intended or foresaw (HC, 233): the idea of the guilt (*schuld*) of humans' "factual existence" as "thrown into the world". In German, *schuld* has two meanings: being guilty of (responsible for) some deed, and having debts in the sense of owing somebody or something. To be, in terms of human existence, is to be indebted. Being thrown into the world already implies that human existence owes its being to something which is not itself. Meanwhile, the 'guilty' self can salvage itself by anticipating its death, because death is the shelter of the essence of the existence of man. Letting-be, like listening to the call of being, originated from two ideas: error and guilt.

Thus, for Heidegger, loving is a human capability, not simply to let it be as we usually understand as an attitude of *laissez-faire*, but more properly in the sense of enabling (LH, 220), the unconditional affirmation of love as Heidegger's appropriation of Augustine's *Volo ut sis*: 'I want you to be'.[2] For Heidegger, letting-be meant obeying the call of being, but this obeying is beyond the traditional distinction between activity and passivity. The call is not to say that human history is conducted and controlled by some hidden power for some hidden purposes (LM, I:179), but is more profoundly related to the mode of human existence.

Indeed, regarding the capability to love as the human capacity for transcendence, the ontological and the political claims are closely related and inter-dependent. The political claim regarding the human capacity for transcendence advocates how worldly love capacitates, through building and caring for the world, how the boundaries which human beings draw together can be shared and demonstrated. And the transcendental dimension of human existence empowers human beings to bridge the invisible and the visible worlds. Therefore, we should therefore always be aware that when Arendt speaks of loving the world, she is not just concerned with its boundaries which we sometimes may or must transcend. She was also concerned with how persons are disclosed and how a cultural-political in-between arises. Arendt's texts make clear that this worldly love is also for the relationships, achievements and institutions that people can realize in the world.

It is nevertheless worth highlighting that what I designate as boundaries do not have their literal meanings as these words politically or socially indicate. The boundaries are metaphors which I use in a broader sense to demonstrate my own understanding, based on a rather speculative reading of the paradoxical tension within the seemingly conflicting nature of Arendt's concept of *amor mundi*, which can be re-constructed as recognition, in a cognitive sense, of the natural or anthropological

[2] Demonstrably, Arendt's debt to Heidegger's idea of *Gelassenheit* (*laissaz faire* or letting-be) is not as a paradoxical will-not-to-will, nor a withdrawal from the world of appearance, as suggested in *The Life of the Mind*. On the contrary, it could be supplement for an existential-ontological clarification of the concept of *amor mundi*.

differences, such as different ancestors or culture.[3] We certainly cannot ignore Arendt's objection to walls and fences which are artificial or man-made. Nor should we forget Arendt's definition of public space as in-between, separating and relating plural human beings. In this, what Arendt objected to, I contest, was those 'institutionalized' barriers, walls and fences which are forcefully imposed upon us, by expelling and excluding. Taking this into consideration, I therefore distance myself from Arendt's own texts. The use of boundaries is very close to what Arendt meant by the term 'in-between', but lays a stronger emphasis on the notion of separating. In my thesis, therefore, boundaries are shared, as a common ground, as a third something, as an ontological determination.

To conclude, loving the world also means respecting and preserving these boundaries which separate and connect human beings on the common ground. In view of this, to love the world is to draw boundary lines on a common ground and thereby respect and protect the boundaries which human beings can transcend as lovers of the world. To be human is to love, so anyone or anything that attempts to blur, ignore, erase or nullify the boundaries destroys the common ground which accommodates the inhabitants of the world.

It follows, significantly, that the sense of boundaries not only enables modern love, but also brings alive the existential ground of transcendence in Arendt's political thinking. In the absence of a metaphysical or theological transcendence which stands above the realm of human affairs, Arendt located the transcendental ineffability of human experiences – the indemonstrable and non-sharable – within 'the darkness of [the] human heart.' In view of this, I shall next further unfold the tension in *amor mundi* regarding how human experience of the world is demonstrable and sharable when love is understood as the human capability to transcend.

Augustinian problem and Heideggerian solution

In this section, I trace the two sources which profoundly influenced Arendt's concept of *amor mundi* with a phenomenological approach: the Augustinian concept of love and Heidegger's notion of fundamental ontology as care.

The theme of love keeps recurring in Arendt's intellectual career. The Latin concept *amor mundi* can be traced back to her doctoral thesis in which she investigated Saint Augustine's concept of love regarding the possibility of neighbourly love in a religious context. Since then, Arendt began to show her commitment to love as the intrinsic determination of being human. Essentially, love shows itself in the ineffable dimension of human experiences of loving; love is constitutive in our human nature: "He who does not love and desire at all is a nobody"

[3] Culture here designates the original Roman meaning as the firsthand intercourse between human and nature or, in Arendt's words, 'cultivating and tending nature.' See, Arendt, "The Crisis in Culture" from BPF.

(LA, 20). As Arendt wrote that, love is a desire, *appetitus*, "the existential link between isolated individual and the rest of reality." (LA, 20) As an existential link, love relates humans with the world. But this link is conceptualized by Augustine in a religious context.

Since love for Augustine was hierarchically varied according to its object. Different objects determine different types of lover: *cupiditas* seeks the "wrong, mundane" object, whilst *caritas* seeks "eternity and the absolute future". Hierarchically, Augustine distinguished three orders of love: "what is above us (*supra nos*), what is beside us (*iuxta nos*), and finally what is beneath us (*infra nos*)" (LA, 39). Among the various objects of love, the most conspicuous and unattainable is life because "only life vanishes from day to day in its rush towards death" (LA, 17). So long as we desire temporal goods, we are under the threat of losing them. We shall therefore always desire life because we are born to lose it; otherwise, if life were never vanishing, we would not covet it.

Augustine traced the origin of mortal existence back to its immortal source (LA, 50). For Augustine, the "meaningfulness of human existence" was transcendental because of the simple fact that man does not create himself but is created. In other words, being created, human beings must seek the meaningfulness of their own existence from outside and beyond (LA, 50). God's creation, including the inhabitants of the world, is the divine givenness which pre-determines two fundamental relations of human existence: the Maker and the lovers. In establishing a relation with God (searching for the origin from the Maker), *amor Dei* turns out to be a presupposition in the quest for the origin of human existence. This origin begins with recollection from dispersion by memory, the space of the past. Namely, who made me? By *amor Dei*, human beings as earthly creatures are craving for the Creator who is "both outside and before man" (LA, 48-49). In other words, God created the world before there was a human world. The cause of human existence is the one who is. In this way, as Arendt observed, a deep and fundamental dependence of human existence is established.[4] As Arendt observed, in "referring back from mortal existence to the immortal source of this existence does created man find the determinant of his being" (LA, 50). That is to say, human existence as such in its earthly life depends on something outside the human condition as we know and experience it.

In this context, love of the neighbour stands at the centre of Arendt's pursuit of a theoretical justification of human love or love of the human, in contrast with self-love or love of God. Indeed, what motivated Arendt into thinking was the question of why should the temporal human being, by "using the world and everything in it (including his own self and his neighbor)", establish the emphatic relationship between the implicit love and explicit Christian demand: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as

[4] As Arendt wrote, "The dependence of desire (*appetitus*) upon the general wish to be happy thus implies a deeper and more fundamental mode of human dependence than desire can ever detect when it acts in accord with its own phenomenological meaning" (LA, 49).

thyself".[5] According to traditional understanding since Plato, the necessity to love each other is because we need each other: human beings are insufficiently independent from each other. But Arendt was not convinced by this old belief. She was curious about how the basic need to survive is powerful enough to substantiate and persuade us to love our neighbour. We must love our neighbours purely out of enjoying their company. Hence, she turned to Augustine's formula and examined the very idea of the commandment of God through neighbourly love: "first, a person is to love his neighbor as God (*sicut Deus*); second, he is to love his neighbor as he loves himself (*tamquam se ipsum*)" (LA. 91). In Christianity, the brotherhood of man creates an unconditional love because we share the same kinship according to the Bible because we are all sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, who fell from paradise. So because we are all born with original sin, everyone is my neighbour. Thus in Arendt's eyes, the traditional neighbourly love out of living together is conditioned by the fact that either we are dependent on one another or obliged by the divine command of God to love each other.

Apart from challenging Augustine's idea of neighbourly love, Arendt critically analysed Augustine's conception of world: "*Caritas* says: love of God and love of neighbor; *cupiditas* says: love of the world and love of this age (*saeculum*)" (LA, 17): quoting Augustine's formula, Arendt saw a threefold factual heterogeneity: the heterogeneity of the otherworldliness, instrumental reasoning and introspective subjectivism, which dominated Augustine's ethics and theology of world. First, the otherworldliness in Augustine's theology refers to a city of God as opposed to the earthly-mundane city.[6] This corresponds to the Platonic two-world distinction between the mundane world of temporal things and the transcendental world of enduring things.[7] Second, the instrumental reasoning catches upon the crux of the otherworldliness when Augustine replaces the maker with God as the Creator of all creatures.[8] Man is building his home on this pre-existing world, the "divine fabric" (*fabrica Dei*). For Augustine, the world was always seen as a means to achieve the love of God. Thus, from a theological point of view, the relationship between man and the world becomes the relationship between the used and the user, the conquered and the master, the creature and the creator. Third, therefore, Augustine's introspective subjectivism can be traced back to a speculative and contemplative tradition since Plato.[9] In sum, the world, including the makers of the world, appears disposable.(Jaspers, 1957)

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[5] What Arendt underscored was this freedom to love anyone we choose to love, rather than being commanded to 'love your neighbour'. This freedom is nowhere to be found in the Western philosophical tradition as Arendt continuously searched for it from the very beginning of her intellectual life, namely, her doctoral thesis.

[6] There are two worlds in Plato: one is the imperfect world and the other is the perfect ideal Form. The Augustinian-Christian notion of 'world' was determined and contextualized in an ontological-theological Platonic background.

[7] JASPERS, K. 1957. *Plato and Augustine*, US, A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace & Company.p. 30.

[8] The idea of making/imitation (*mimesis*) is of Platonic origin: the world can be grasped from three factors: the maker, the model, and the product.

[9] He partly belonged to "a tradition that reached from Plato to Plotinus" (LA, 62). Neo-Platonism internalized the ideal world, later inherited by Augustine, who transferred the Greek 'soul', originally meaning man's essence, into an inner world which provides the possibility of an afterlife. Actually, "He never stopped trying to understand and interpret the world in a philosophical-cosmological term." Also see, Arendt, Essays in Understanding.

Overall, the structural fallacy of Augustine's theology and philosophy is that it presupposes and enhances the metaphysical two-world theory regarding his major claim and depiction of two cities, the secular city which is temporal and perishable, and God's city which is eternal and enduring. In other words, the Augustinian model of *amor mundi* is determined and structured by a deep-rooted ontological and metaphysical tradition, the same tradition that nourished Augustine's founding of Christianity and the blueprint of his two-cities theory. Moreover, Augustine's rather suspicious attitude toward earthly politics reflected his belief in a transcendental city of God which exists beyond and above the human world. However, in its ontological and theological sense, an otherworldly love of God undermines the very possibility of worldly love. This dilemma of love almost sets up the basic paradigm of an Augustinian model of *amor mundi*: a love of a mundane world which is demanded from above by God. (Scott, 2010)

Having laid out the Augustinian paradox of neighbourly love from Arendt's thesis, we come across a fundamental problem: it is almost impossible to work out an interpretation of the transcendental aspect of love in Arendt's political agenda without reproducing the metaphysical fallacy of the two-world theory. Thus, in the following, I shall shift the focus from Augustine to Heidegger, who was well aware of this metaphysical structural fallacy, and instead offer an alternative structure of human existence through a hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation of three key concepts*:* care*,* death and self.

Care (*sorge*) is the fundamental mode of being for Dasein in *Being and Time*. Dasein (being-there as the existence of human being) is absorbed into the world with the structural whole of care. With care, Dasein projects itself in front of its present, into the future, based on its past, and is thrown back to its present. The temporal unfolding of care, unlike technical time, is experienced through and with human existence; thus, care is also understood as existential temporality and time is always presentable, technically, with the form of space. Heidegger saw Dasein as being-alongside the world. Instead of 'I-here', the locative personal designation, Dasein is actually absorbed into this world and getting further from itself. In this existential spatiality, what seems close is actually far away. In an authentic being, Dasein is pulling back towards itself from the other.

Care is the existential concern with Dasein's own being: when Dasein is thrown into the world through the mood of anxiety, it reveals itself as nothingness for man who knows his own mortality (SZ, 276-277; LM, 181-182).[10] There is a remarkable shift of *sorge* as concern with itself to *sorge* as taking care not of itself, but of being. In the latter sense, men are the guardians of being. Heidegger used two terms to describe different modes of *sorge* to indicate this shift: *besorgen* (concern) and *fuersorge* (care-for, solicitude). *Besorgen* is concerned with things (equipment ready-to-hand or nature present-at-hand, or the environment) whereas *fuersorge* is an

[10] *Das nackte Das sim Nichts der Welt* – "the naked That in the Nothingness of the world."

encountering or care-for people (the other selves). In other words, *besorgen* is when we are concerned and deal with things and *fuersorgen* is when we care for and get along with others. We encounter others inevitably by encountering the work-world of things and nature. Dasein is always busy with something, dealing with some business, keeping itself occupied. We always care for others. We are fond of, fed up with or indifferent toward the other selves; we also take great pain or pleasure in this encounter, and we always understand the self in the dominant modes of being-with and in the presence of other selves. Although we die alone, we live together. Care designates a constitutive and existential engagement in the world.

Death is the termination which determines the way that Dasein comports itself in its caring. Death is patently present in the notion of life, between the arrival at birth and the departure at death. For Heidegger, death is always but not the only utmost possibility for the being of man. For once it has been actualized, for instance in suicide, man would "lose the possibility he has of existing in the face of death" (SZ, 261). So now death becomes the shrine which collects, protects and salvages the essence of mortals and appears to be the "shelter of Being in the play of the world" (LM, 192). Hence, based on the temporality of care, death as an end, as well as a phenomenon, is predetermined as a future event which comes back to the present by the very activity of thinking. When thinking, we draw the future back to us, in front of us; we are face-to-face with the future-death. We savour death, examine and try to comprehend it, but to no avail because it is unfathomable as annihilation, nothingness, or *nicht*. In this comprehension of death, we project our past into the nearness of the future. This is what Heidegger means by 'projection': we are always there, instead of here; we are always in the future and the past, instead of the fleeting present. Henceforth, being always 'lingers' in the present "between twofold absence": arrival and departure.

More importantly, death gives rise to love. How Heidegger's concept of death defines the temporality of human existence which comprises a political phenomenology of love in Arendt's thinking has been widely discussed and, to some degree, confirmed. (Tamboukou, 2013) For example, for Tamboukou, the Augustinian concept of love and theory of memory help to sustain Arendt's departure from Heidegger's death-oriented philosophy and her turn to a concept of natality of her own.(Tamboukou, 2013) Young-Bruehl mentioned the temporal structure of human existence in the light of Heidegger's teaching, in which worldly love is supposed to be future-oriented; nevertheless, Arendt re-configured the future-oriented worldly love as transcendental as it is directed to the ultimate past; and only existential love exists in the present and absorbs the capacities of the past and future as memory and hope. (Young-Bruehl and Arendt, 2004)

Benhabib's understanding of Heidegger's ontology hinges on the idea or Heidegger's obsession of death: in claiming death as a social fact, Heidegger's idea of death as his methodological solipsism is based on the Augustinian notion that "when

we are confronted with death … we are not on the ground of our being" (Benhabib, 1996) (106-7). I believe that to reduce Heidegger to a death-centralised thinker is partial, since mortality and nothingness are the boundary accessible only for working out the meaningfulness of living and being. For the same reason, it is also reductive to treat Arendt as a birth-centralised thinker.

The concept of self in *Being and Time* is the answer to the question of 'who' as distinct to 'what' a man is. The *self* is the term for man's existence distinct from whatever quality he might possess. Polemically, the self is derived from the 'they' (*das Man*). Just as death is only appreciated by life, the self is only understandable by the existence of others. Being-with is the kind of structure through which the self is possible only in the presence of others, which is different from the the metaphysical tradition with which Heidegger took issue: "an otherless, isolated 'I'". (King, 1964) Take 'care' for instance, Heidegger use *fursorge* to highlight our care for the other (BT, 154) and criticised the traditional interpretation for tending to categorically absolutize the relationship of the self and the other. 'Others' used to mean "everyone else but me – those over against whom the 'I' stands out" (BT, 154), but the others were not to be understood categorically but existentially for Heidegger. That is to say, there is no distinct boundary between you and I, and there is no such thing as either-you-or-me; but a totality, such as Dasein. We always understand the self in the dominant modes of being-with, and in the presence of other selves. Being-with is a mode of being always as being with others. The structure of being-with is always to understand the world in advance as a with-world, always to establish one's own reference among a web of relationships, always to see others as self-perceiving, self-identifying. We see others suffer, we might suffer; if others feel happy, we might feel the same happiness. Based on a common sense, therefore, we might understand a stranger (BT, 162).

Having discussed Heidegger's analysis of Dasein and its structure from the hermeneutic phenomenological perspective through care, death and self, we now seek to understand the existential structure of Dasein. It is not the given traditional 'I', nor the union of body and soul, nor any description of property present-at-hand and within-the-world, but being-in-the-world as a constitutive whole of human existence and its environing world. Each of us has a world or we are the world. This world is a with-world primordially and existentially and this with-world is built in Dasein's being-with. Only when we admit that we are in the world with others does our being become possible and somehow meaningful. Instead of projecting from what is internal towards an outside, we are always pulling away from caring for others back to the self because we are by our destiny absorbed into the world.

To summarize, I have demonstrated two possible and relevant threads of origin in Arendt's conception of worldly love: her analysis of Augustine's paradox of neighbourly love and her understanding of Heidegger's phenomenological solution through care, death and self. In providing a holistic point of view, Heidegger provided

a critique of the traditional perception of the way of being human as problematic regarding the intrinsic structure of the two-world theory to interpret relations between lovers (human beings) and the world. For Heidegger, the world is the opening of human existence by way of questioning whether the world is the human or *vice versa*.

Amor mundi as human capability to transcend

In this section, I shall argue that the way in which the faculty of freedom comes out of hiding and makes its appearance in the world is through creating its own worldly space: by building and protecting new boundaries, or admitting and defending established ones. In political theory, the human heart, as the secret hiding place of the human capacity/faculty of freedom, is indemonstrable; but as the *raison d'etre* of politics, freedom is a demonstrable fact. In this context, the ontological dimension (experience) and political dimension (force) of the human capacity to love coincide.

Through the phenomenological gaze, the tension of *amor mundi* testifies to the transcendental dimension of human existence: the darkness of the human heart and the urge to appear. It seems that love as *eros* (pure erotic desire) might look the same, but the appearances of love are varied and always changing. Due to the phenomenological inconsistency of the eventful human experiences of love, we always find ourselves worlding rather awkwardly. In traditional ontology and theology, we need particular transcendental sources which teach us how to love and which grant meaning to human existence. In LaFay's words, "only by allowing a transcendence (God) to enter my life in a personal way do I make it my own experience, and further acquire meaningfulness of my own existence." (LaFay, 2014) However, the individual transcendental experiences only give me capacity to be human. In fact, rather than meaningless perfectibility, fallibility constitutes a large part of the beauty of humanity" (LM, I:34-38). Arendt urged us to shift our attention away from the self to care for the world. Relevantly, as highlighted by Villa, Arendt's drawing of ontological implication into the political is most persuasive when referring back to her original critique of modernity as world alienation and the withdrawal of the political in *The Human Condition*. Compared with the "enormous variety and richness of overt human conduct", what is happening inside could be monotonously the same and pervasively ugly. (To refute a divine transcendence from above, the modern psychology of erotic love is based on the differentiation between what is inside and what is outside the human body.) (LM, I:34-35).

The darkness of the human heart is not just a metaphor through which Arendt understood human emotions but more of a hermeneutic facticity through which Arendt's whole political phenomenological investigation of human existence hinges on the impenetrable darkness, which is of two positive designations: first, the inner darkness of the human heart (the ineffability undetected by and unknown to others and even to the selves); second, the private darkness of human life as an intimate sphere in juxtaposition with the public sphere (CE, 182-3; HC, 64). Both of these dark

dimensions, for Arendt, breed and harbour the highest possibility of human existence: "to have no private place of one's own (like a slave) meant to be no longer human" (HC, 64).

First, the darkness of private life, in a biological sense, refers to the private space in which adults grow up to leave their childhood being at home, retreating to confront the inevitable and existential estrangement from the world. In a social-political sense, the private space is the "dark and hidden side of the public realm" (HC, 64). Arendt did not denigrate the private realm as such; on the contrary, she valued the private realm as a place to hide in and retreat to and spend our leisure time. The private realm provides a sense of security, away from the exposure and danger of the adventurous public life. What concerned her, I believe, was that the private realm has conquered and infiltrated the public realm in the modern labouring and consuming society, and that life becomes both the priority and the goal (*telos*). Arendt realised that the decisive step for the rise of the social designates the elimination of both the public realm for politics and the private realm for retreat and withdrawal. (Allison, 2017)

Second, the darkness of the human heart is more relevant in confirming the transcendental dimension of human existence. Derived from the Christian tradition, the heart is where all the desires, fears and feelings hide. (Degerman, 2019) Like a seed buried in the soil until it accumulates enough power, energy and nutrition to stretch abroad and grow upward into the open air and under the sun. The darkness of the human heart, in its own mysterious way, anticipates the unpredictability of human action and the complicity of interaction between men because love is as mysterious as, and, inseparable from the self as the human darkness. In this regard, this hiddenness is the essential unlimited source of our human existence.

Arendt's concept of freedom also inverted the phenomenology of the basic presupposition of the darkness of the human heart. Freedom is primarily a human faculty which dwells in a dark place since the human heart is the place which reserves and hides desire, will, hope and yearning. What is hidden is never supposed to appear unless freedom acts and makes it appear. The faculty of freedom is not virtue and virtuosity but a supreme gift which only man, as an earthly creature, can perform.

> "Our whole existence rests, after all, on a chain of *miracles*, as it were – the coming into being of the earth, the development of organic life on it, the evolution of mankind out of the animal species." (HC, 168)

In Arendt's words, freedom "animates and inspires all human activities and is the hidden source of production of all great and beautiful things" (HC, 167). In this regard, I argue that freedom is the human capability to carry across (transcend) the indemonstrable into being as appearing. Freedom transforms nothing into something which did not exist before, not given "as an object of cognition or imagination" or "could not be known" (HC, 150). "To be human and to be free are one and the same"

(BPF, 166) What nourishes the transcending capacity of freedom is the "darkness of the human heart", impenetrable by any scientific and technological gaze because *amor mundi* names the human capacity for transcendence: transgression or translation. Freedom is the human capability to transcend in a way that the sheer capacity of freedom to begin and act brings the darkness of human heart with all its wanting and yearning out into the light.

Intriguingly, similar to the paradoxical tension of *amor mundi*, in Arendt's eyes, the question of freedom forces our mind into "dilemmas of logical impossibilities", such as a square circle (HC, 142). Indeed, the question of 'what is freedom?' is a classical contradiction since freedom is the foundation of all our political and judicial decision-making. Even so, human action is subject to the universal law of causality. Human life is driven by the forces of automatic, natural and cosmic processes, insofar we are "part of organic nature" too (HC, 166-7). Subject to those ruinous natural processes, there can be no single act or event which can ever "save or deliver a man, or a nation, or mankind" once and for all. That is why periods of freedom have always been relatively short in human history. (Ingram, 1988) Even so, human beings are given the capacity of freedom to act and to interrupt the chain of causality, and human action must be free from motive and intended goal as a predictable effect (HC, 150).[11]

Arendt warned her readers not to confuse freedom as 'feeling' with freedom as 'action'. We must be careful not to confuse the darkness of the human heart with the inward space as a place of estrangement from the world. The inner freedom is derivative and politically irrelevant because the inwardness, "as a place of absolute freedom within one's own self", is to be found in those who lack a worldly condition (HC, 145) because the "inward space where the self is sheltered against the world" offers an escape tunnel for feeling free. Certainly freedom is not a feeling of being free as it is not a demonstrable phenomenon, as Arendt understood it that freedom "as related to politics is not a phenomenon of the will." (HC, 150) Further, freedom is not choosing between right and wrong, good and evil. Rather, freedom is nothing but the human capacity to act, to initiate and to begin. Thus, freedom and natality constitute a conjugated pair: "Without a politically guaranteed public realm, freedom lacks the worldly space to make its appearance" (HC, 146).

So as a demonstrable fact Arendt maintained that freedom and politics "coincide and are related to each other like two sides of the same coin" (BPF, 147) since the human heart, as the secret hidden place of the human capacity/faculty of freedom, is indemonstrable (the ontological dimension); whereas simply as the *raison d'etre* of politics, freedom is a demonstrable fact (the political dimension). In view of this, the way in which the faculty of freedom comes out of hiding and makes its appearance in the world is through creating its own worldly space. In this regard, I agree with

[11] For the relevance of the relation between freedom and *amor mundi* as friendship, to take a commonplace example, I cannot choose my relatives, but I can always choose my friends, and I can never treat friends as a means to certain purposes.

Allison Weir who claimed that Arendt's concept of *amor mundi* "involves the creation of the world through political discourse among equal citizens, and this is the essence of political freedom". (Allison, 2017)

Labour is "subject to the necessity of life" and work is "dependent upon given material"; only action, as the capacity for freedom, relies on the realm of human affairs which "owes its existence to nobody and nothing but human beings" (HC, 234). Therefore, freedom as being free from people, by staying away from the realm of human affairs, is to renounce the privilege of action, it is a 'non-acting'. To live in exile, for instance, and "safeguard one's sovereignty and integrity as a person" perfectly illustrates how "we look upon freedom with the eyes of tradition" as Arendt said. This way of drawing boundaries was not plausible and even dangerous for Arendt.

Freedom as action interrupts the chain of causality, but necessarily and inevitably, human freedom (by acting and initiating) tends to falter and stumble, and thus becomes guilt for the unexpected and irreversible actions. Unable to undo or prevent the consequence, human beings are always capable of destroying "the earth and earthly nature". Irreversibility designates the "incapacity to undo what has been done" and unpredictability is the "incapacity to foretell the consequences of any deed or even to have reliable knowledge of its motives" (HC, 232). Irreversibility and unpredictability comprise the uncertainty of human action.

Only under historical circumstances can immortality be the measurement of the frailty of human affairs because history is understood similarly with the idea of nature as systems of processes. Natural history tends to investigate the frailty instead of the uncertainty of human affairs by treating human beings as victims and sufferers, rather than the authors and doers of what they have done because natural history is guided by a necessary pattern of an irreversible process.

Regarding the uncertainty and frailty of human action, the "hallmark of human existence", as Arendt called it, should be seen as tragedy rather than absurdity, as long as human pride in the spontaneity of action is still intact. Kant was a believer who was dedicated to acquitting the guilty of the unpredictable and irreversible consequences of action. Kant had the courage to "insist solely on the purity of his motives" and saved acting man "from losing faith in man and his potential greatness" (HC, 235, n.75). Instead of turning to the outstanding human capacity of judgment, Arendt turned to the human capability of love.

Love is the power to let go of the past and embrace the future. According to Andrea Ney, love is not one of the political virtues, but "plays an indirect role in preparing us to forgive and promise".(Nye, 2013): p. 258, n. 35). Undoubtedly, as mentioned earlier, love involves determining specifically 'who' instead of 'what' somebody is. And the 'whoness' is essential to promise and forgive, regarding of the vision of a specific lover, for Arendt.

The basic error of this mode of boundary-drawing is to identify freedom and sovereignty. Politics and philosophy have taken this identification for granted for a long time. The "ideal of uncompromising self-sufficiency and mastership" and the human condition of plurality are contradictory because "no man can be sovereign because not one man, but men, inhabit the earth". As co-inhabitants, plurality does not designate the unfortunate fact that humans have relied on each other due to their limited individual strength (HC, 234). To safeguard one's sovereignty and integrity as a person by drawing boundary lines around one's property seems to offset the characteristic weakness of plurality as uncertainty. It also seems to "win an untouchable integrity of the human person, overcome the condition of non-sovereignty", but in fact, the price is the real world in exchange "for an imaginary one where these others would simply not exist" (HC, 234). In so doing, we either lose control of our action and leave it to historical necessity while at the same time claiming sovereignty of the self, or we run away from the realm of human affairs and hide in an imaginary Utopia and become abandoned by the world. We do not want either option because they both testify to and enhance the absurdity of human existence between freedom and sovereignty. The human faculty of freedom is therefore not valued in terms of strength or weakness in the sense of self-sufficiency, but of relative transcendence within the realm of human affairs: "The human capacity for action does not harbor within itself certain potentialities which enable it to survive the disabilities of non-sovereignty" (HC, 236), but the 'not' in this extract is negated by Arendt's subsequent discussion of promising and forgiveness.

For Arendt, and I agree with her, promising and forgiving were the human capacity to transcend in regard to fulfilling the continuity of time. For one thing, promising is the power of stabilization to partially dispel the unpredictability and unreliability derived from the darkness of the human heart (HC, 244), and the spuriously claimed sovereignty by an isolated single entity – be it a person a nation – assumes "limited realities" since sovereignty can have a limited reality by virtue of our power of mutual promise insofar as it resides in the "limited independence from the incalculability of the future" (HC, 245). The mutually acknowledged and shared boundaries mean that for those who have the faculty of making and keeping promises, their consistency of identity can be secured.

For the other, for Arendt, without being forgiven, the human capacity to act would be "confined to one single deed from which we could never recover" and "we would remain the victim of its consequences forever" (HC, 237). Our tradition is "highly selective and excludes from articulate conceptualization a great variety of authentic political experiences" (HC, 238-9). In the political context, however, forgiving is a remedy of action's everyday trespassing when action constantly establishes new relationships within a web of relations. Forgiving is to "make it possible for life to go on by constantly releasing men from what they have done unknowingly" (HC, 240). This is the brilliant point of relating forgiving through human plurality with the 'who'. "Nobody can forgive himself" and the deep reason

for that is that who somebody is is revealed in action and speech which are dependent upon others. Incapable of perceiving who I am without the appearance of others, the who is impenetrable and inaccessible to myself:

> "Closed within ourselves, we would never be able to forgive ourselves any failing or transgression because we would lack the experience of the person for the sake of whom one can forgive" (HC, 243).

Only love "possesses an unequaled power of self-revelation and an unequalled clarity of vision for the disclosure of *who*, precisely because it is unconcerned to the point of total unworldliness with *what* the loved person may be, with his qualities and shortcomings no less than with his achievements, failings, and transgressions" (HC, 243).

In other words, the power of love destroys the in-between which relates and separates people from each other, and brings a new world, the child as "love's own product" (HC, 242). Natality as the "world-creating faculty of love" is never the same as fertility, one of the subjects of modern genetic sciences, but more of the sheer creativity of "inserting a new world into the existing" one as a phenomenological and hermeneutic event. Arendt used a mythological tale as a metaphor to depict the ineffable experience of love:

> … the sky is seen as a gigantic goddess who still bends down upon the earth god, from whom she is being separated by the air god who was born between them and its now lifting her up. Thus, a world space composed of air comes into being and inters itself between earth and sky. (HC, 242)

So how do we justify Arendt's claim that love is "a power of the universe, insofar the universe is alive"? (DTB, 372). I propose that we try to take the human capacity for transcendence into consideration in order to justify Arendt's eulogy of love. It was previously discussed that the world is the existential horizon towards which human beings transcend. What we call 'world' is constituted by the fabric of heaven and earth, as well as the inhabitants, including all lovers of the world. For Augustine, the inhabitants were called 'the world' (LA, 17).[12] In this regard, the human world transcends the man-made world. Regarding the "persistence and continuity in time", according to Arendt, the "extraordinary resilience" of the world of human beings is demonstrably superior to the "stable durability of the solid world of things", or the man-made product (HC, 232). The resilience of the human world does not guarantee the continuation of the human race, but rather the workflow or process of human affairs is such that "a single deed can quite literally endure throughout time until mankind itself has come to an end" (HC, 233). Instead of a vainglorious

[12] This is a quotation which Arendt translated and cited from Augustine's *Homilies on the First of John* II, 12.

competition, this is a matter of human pride if men were able to bear the burden of human deeds of "irreversibility and unpredictability" which grant an enormous capacity for endurance and strength (HC, 233).

Conclusion

In this paper, I have demonstrated how love is the capability to world and the sense in which loving is part of the transcendental dimension of human beings, by reconceptualizing *amor mundi* as a theoretical tension which in multiple ways breeds a vast potentiality of theoretical and interpretive power. This power enables us to analyse the term with fresh eyes in the light of a hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation. To underscore the significance of establishing and protecting the boundaries, I have used Arendt's conception of freedom as a paradigm to demonstrate how she incorporated the ontological and political dimensions of worldly love into the human capacity for transcendence. I therefore conclude that love as the capability to world not only draws, presents and protects boundaries, but also provides access for man to cross over them. In other words, human beings are lovers who have the capability to love by creating and transforming the world into a home. In the hermeneutic phenomenological sense, *amor mundi* designates not only an inheritance of the legacy of the world which we are born with and comport ourselves around, but also a pathos of creating and promising a home for the future.

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