

The Capacity to World

The Transcendental Ground of Hannah Arendt's Conception of the Human

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Abstract

For Hannah Arendt, loss of the world designates a full-scale dehumanization in which technology has infiltrated human life unfathomably. To humanize the world, Arendt looks to politics 'with eyes unclouded by philosophy.' Given her emphasis on the importance of political action for human life, the transcendental aspects of Arendt's conception of the human tend to have been neglected. However, in this thesis, I show that we have not fully appreciated the *meta* dimension of the human in Arendt's writings. To do this, I turn to her theoretical sources both from Martin Heidegger and Roman antiquity. Arendt's indirect encounter with Heidegger's project on metaphysics and hermeneutic phenomenology offers a refreshed glimpse at two concepts in Arendt's thought, which are essential to her conception of the human, but are often taken for granted: *polis* and *logos*. Her direct engagement with Roman antiquity complicates but also allows us to see how she develops her conception of the human through two further concepts: *amor mundi* and *auctoritas*. Through a hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation of these concepts, I show how, for Arendt, human being is *meta* being with capacity to world beyond earthly and biological existence in pursuit some transcendental higher level of existence. To world is a particular human capacity in a double sense. First, as *capability to love and speak*, the capacity to world refers to the constitutive human ability such as *creating* the world into a lovable home by measuring, calculating, mapping, navigating, and legislating etc. with scientific precision, as well as *establishing relationships* with different worlds by initiating and acting with divergences, uncertainties, and ineffability, etc. Second, as *carrier of polity and authority*, the capacity to world refers to the *potentiality* of human capabilities to shine and immortalize, as well as 'reservoir' of space of appearance and space of remembrance necessary for its phenomenal and political existence because, as Heidegger suggests, human being *is* time and space. Thus, I explicate why and how, for Arendt, *human existence itself is the capacity of confirmation of its own being*.

Abbreviations

[LA]	<i>Love and Saint Augustine</i>
[OT]	<i>The Origins of Totalitarianism</i>
[HC]	<i>The Human Condition</i>
[EJ]	<i>Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil.</i>
[OR]	<i>On Revolution</i>
[BPF]	<i>Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought</i>
[WA]	“What is Authority?” in BPF
[CE]	“The Crisis in Education” in BPF
[CC]	“The Crisis in Culture” in BPF
[MDT]	<i>Men in Dark Times</i>
[OV]	<i>On Violence</i>
[JP]	<i>The Jew as Pariah</i>
[JW]	<i>The Jewish Writings</i>
[LM I]	<i>Life of the Mind, Vol. 1, Thinking</i>
[LM II]	<i>Life of the Mind, Vol. 2, Willing</i>
[LKPP]	<i>Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy.</i>
[EU]	<i>Essays in Understanding: 1930–1954</i>
[RJ]	<i>Responsibility and Judgment</i>
[PP]	<i>The Promise of Politics</i>
[DTB]	<i>Denktagebuch</i>
[BC]	<i>Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy</i>
[BT]	<i>Being and Time</i>
[BW]	<i>Basic Writings</i>
[WM]	“What is Metaphysics?” from BW
[OWA]	“The Origin of the Work of Art” from BW
[LH]	“Letter on Humanism” from BW
[BDT]	“Building Dwelling Thinking” from BW
[IM]	<i>An Introduction to Metaphysics</i>
[Heraclitus]	<i>The Inception of Occidental Thinking and Logic: Heraclitus’s Doctrine of the Logos</i>

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God created man, but men are a human, earthly product, the product of human nature.

Arendt, "The Promise of Politics"

To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell.

Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking"

Introduction: the Modern Loss of the Human

Today technology has infiltrated human life to an unprecedented degree. With the rapid development of data technology, the modern world has become transparent as everything is subject to an omnipresent technological gaze. There is nowhere to hide from the surveillance of CCTV or the internet.¹ Cloud computing knows where and when people are regularly shopping, how they are dating, where they prefer dining, and what kind of music, films or novels they like. Based on their on-line behaviour, more information about everyone has become obtainable, including education, work experience, social networks, private preferences and even whereabouts. Computer algorithms enable human behaviour to be collected as data and analysed, discerned and predicted and industries and suppliers can adjust their production, distribution and services accordingly. Human beings are analysed to such an extent that machines know more about you than your own family or even you yourself do. Cloud computing is changing industry as well as the way that people conduct business.² Economics seems to welcome a new era of profit at the cost of domesticity and intimacy. Politics eventually falls under the control of technology and is replaced by administration and governance.

With this catastrophic technological intrusion into human life, nothing is immune, including our self-perception and self-orientation as human beings. In this fast-developing world, human life becomes a self-producing and self-consuming cycle. Once positioned as labourers and consumers, people are now reduced to 'human capital', a concept which describes how to harness various reifications of human resources. Associated with these concepts is the pandemic

¹ With 5G technology enabling the superfast streaming of data, communication operators have even come up with the idea of the 'Internet of Everything', namely all things are interconnected. Technology knows everything about me. Life could be harder if people do not use smart phones, when the traditional payment system as cash is almost extinguished from various stores, from the giant shopping mall to the street-food van. Even vagrants use a QR code to beg for money. This is a pretty scary picture.

² Industries are going to reform and replace the traditional modes of purchasing and manufacture, by direct orders from consumers, or by accurate data-processing to predict the supply and demand for the upcoming season. At the same time, businesses are adapting to and riding on this new trend and transferring into on-line selling. Machines can predict your next shopping time and list; the system could automatically order it on-line for you.

of anxiety among young people. The deepest fear for modern women and men is that they might be abandoned by this fast-moving epoch. They might become superfluous human beings. They are afraid of becoming useless to this world, even if they have no idea what 'useful' means.

Hannah Arendt foresaw these developments.³ She saw how rapidly developing scientific technology has changed how the world is understood and the human re-defined. Although Arendt never explicitly defined the human, her work questioned the human condition through her insight that human power can destroy itself and reduce us to something less than human. Indeed, in Arendt's eyes, people were deprived of the world in a society of labouring and consuming. In such a society, a complacency emerges among those who are satisfied with being part of this process of production and consumption.

Arendt noticed that the launch of the first space satellite in 1957 did not cause "pride and awe" in this "tremendous human power", but an escapist fantasy that human beings might be liberated from our 'imprisonment' on earth (HC, 1). In this scenario, what frightened Arendt were two related abnormalities. First, the future human is likely to rebel against human existence, which she viewed as a "free gift from nowhere" (HC, 2). Second, what has been done is always quicker than thought to the extent that it seems that our brain is "unable to follow what we do" (HC, 1-3).⁴ In this context, Arendt urged us to reflect on "what we are doing", given her concern that artificial machines will do our thinking and speaking for us in the future (HC, 4). Echoing these abnormalities, our former complacency has escalated into a new type of mentality: an anxiety about existence. Even

³ Her trenchant criticisms of modernity marked her indisputable presence in modern political thought. She offered analyses of phenomena which characterize the modern world with specific losses, for example of the world, public space, human speech, and authority. On Arendt's critique of modernity, a complete library has been published, ranging from the concept of modernity to existential, political problems. Sources include but are not limited to BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications., D'ENTRÈVES, M. P. 2002. *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, Routledge., CANOVAN, M. 1994. *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press. BARNOUW, D. 1990. Speaking about Modernity: Arendt's Construct of the Political. *New German Critique*, No. 50 (Spring - Summer, 1990), pp. 21-39, PAREKH, S. 2008. *Hannah Arendt and the Challenge of Modernity: A Phenomenology of Human Condition*, New York & London, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

⁴ "... men everywhere are by no means slow to catch up and adjust to scientific discoveries and technical developments, but that, on the contrary, they have outsped them by decades."

scientists and researchers are reflecting on the possibility that the entire human species is threatened with being superseded or annihilated by machines. After all, for Arendt, thinking and speaking are the very human activities which distinguish and lift us above mere earthly and biological existence.

What I consider 'modern' is very different from what Arendt saw as modern, given that she was writing over half a century ago. Yet, if Arendt were still writing today, in a world which has the internet, ever-present social media and the ever-changing pattern of international politics, the basis of her arguments about modern problems would be very similar. Hence, in a word, her thinking is of significance in shedding light onto the fundamental problems which we are facing today and which are not affected by the new gadgets and new phenomena: we are still in a labouring and consuming society which is dominated by the sweeping power of un-stoppable technology.⁵

My purpose in this thesis is to interrogate the concept of transcendence in Hannah Arendt's thinking with a view to revealing a new perspective on her understanding of human beings. The centrality of the transcendental dimension of her concept of the human has not been fully appreciated (this will be discussed in Chapter 1). In this thesis, I understand the human capacity of taking the burden of life itself and of building a world which originated in the past and carrying it forward. Distinctively but not entirely a new approach, I shall examine how this human capacity as the capacity for transcendence was inspired by Heidegger's philosophy. I shall examine Arendt's insight regarding the importance of politics as a way to present and protect the transcendental dimension of human existence.

In this thesis, I shall make two claims regarding the human capacity for

⁵ It should be noted that unlike Waseem Yaqoob, who provided a refreshing reference point by investigating Arendt's critical engagement with Heidegger regarding their discourse over science and technology, this thesis stops at the threshold and only focuses on the political, social and moral consequences which scientific and technological development has brought to the modern world. YAQOOB, W. 2014. The Archimedean Point: Science and Technology in the Thought of Hannah Arendt, 1951-1963. *Journal of European Studies*, 199-224.

transcendence. First, the ontological claim relating to the nature of being and human existence, highlighting the borderline experiences which trigger the human capacity of thinking and speaking,⁶ and second, the political claims which explore what human beings should do and how we should organize our societies, involving human activities engaged in pursuing a potential immortality on earth. In view of this, on the one hand, human beings transcend a kind of 'mere animality' through speech and language. On the other, human beings transcend the limits of our finite lives by creating a shared history. Both were important for Arendt.

The political claim, aspiring to a relatively permanent, stable and durable world, is well acknowledged among Arendtian readers. The world must not be erected for one generation and for the living only; "it must transcend the life-span of mortal men" (HC, 55). The world which we share with others must "transcend" into "potential earthly immortality", according to Arendt. Without this transcendence, she argued, "no politics, strictly speaking, no common world and no public realm, is possible" (HC 55). Potential immortality is what the ancient Greeks were striving for through works, deeds and words. Significantly, this political dimension of the human capacity for transcendence into potential earthly immortality evokes the Greek idea of achieving a kind of immortality through historical remembrance, which involves not simply speaking, acting and thinking as suggested by the ontological claim, but rather a whole institution of history and recording human deeds (I shall explore this in Chapter 3).

Although the ontological claim regarding the human capacity for transcendence is hardly unfamiliar to her readers, her use of 'world' as a verb as well as a noun is an ontological device referring to human existence manifested in two layers of her understanding of Heidegger's concept of 'being-in-the-world': first, 'worldly' distinguishes human beings from other entities (such as beasts or God), and second, what really matters is 'the transcendent' in terms of "a supersensible being".⁷ The ontological claim might seem counter-intuitive insofar

⁶ See Arendt's analysis of the ineffable in Section 12: 'Metaphor and Ineffable' in *The Life of the Mind*.

⁷ "The reference to 'being-in-the-world' as the basic trait of the *humanitas* of *homo humanus* does not

as transcendence is a key ontological and theological term which represents the perpetual pursuit of otherworldly being, that is, an 'external' absoluteness or substantial ground which forces itself upon the human world. I maintain that, by identifying this structural fallacy of the two-world theory in traditional metaphysics, however, Arendt's political theory was animated by this transcendental dimension of human experience which provides access to the phenomenal world. After all, since the annihilation of the supersensory realm which used to belong to "whatever is not given to the senses" – God, Being or the First Principle (LM, I:10), the distinctions between the realm of the visible and the invisible, the sensory and the supersensory and so on are invalidated. Since Parmenides (fl. 475BC), according to Arendt, the supersensory realm has been believed to be "more real, more truthful, more meaningful than what appears, that it is not just *beyond* sense perception but *above* the world of senses" (LM, I:10).

Arendt distrusted the contemplative tradition of western philosophy on the grounds that it remains hostile to the realm of human affairs on the one hand, and on the other, she also distrusted the categories of disciplines such as anthropology, biology, psychology and other social sciences.⁸ By pursuing what is empirically observable, these disciplines are systematically built upon categorical thinking which reduces and bypasses the indemonstrable, ineffable and transcendental dimension of human beings into derivative and insignificant categories just because they are scientifically indemonstrable. For instance, incalculable yet perceivable human experiences such as the irrational, impulsive, transitory epiphenomena of feelings or emotions are described as 'ineffable' in terms of laying a linguistic ground of what and how we feel. Yet within a

assert that the human being is merely a 'worldly' creature understood in a Christian sense, thus a creature turned away from God and so cut loose from '*Transcendence*'. What is really meant by this word would more clearly be called '*the transcendent*'. The transcendent is a supersensible being. That is considered the highest being in the sense of the first cause of all beings." (EU, 443)

⁸ With the declaring of the modern demise of philosophy by Nietzsche, the task of questioning the human condition falls to other sub-disciplines: anthropology studies human beings most generally but still classify humans according to their geological, biological, ethnic, cultural, economic and even climatic differences. Modern biology treats human beings as *homo sapiens* as well-evolved from primates. Psychology anatomizes the mental world of human being based on an inside/outside dichotomy. For Descartes, being human is being able to think and humans are thinking beings. The idea of total control and total know ability mirrors certain concerns expressed by Heidegger in his *The Question Concerning Technology* essay.

metaphysical disciplinary design, those indemonstrable yet perceivable experiences *can* be presented through poetry, paintings, sculpture, literature as the modern subjects of aesthetics, or the so-called humanities and social sciences, politics, ethics and rhetoric.

Yet, modern science and technology should not be posited as a totally dangerous force. From another point of view, modern science and technology not only changed the world, but also provide new access (relation) to the world.⁹ Take the launching of the first space satellite and the subsequent escapist fantasy as an example: the idea of liberating ourselves from the planet also captured the imagination of earth-bound creatures. The experiences of space travel, if only for a moment, involve going beyond our planetary limits and might take us by surprise with no words to say, mainly because they are somehow on the edge of our reality or in the blank space of our languages and cognition. The phenomena which we are attempting to understand and the ability even to imagine capturing those borderline experiences draw us into a sense of ineffableness and make it really important to define who we are and what it is to be human. As I discuss in Chapter 1 and later on, I use 'ineffableness' to describe the obtrusiveness, cognitively and linguistically, which makes us realize our finite existence. The 'ineffability' makes us wonder and think and brings back the finitude of human existence which can be felt only when we are confronted with twofold boundaries: cognitive and linguistic.

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. So unlike psychology, anthropology, physiology or any other subdivision of scientific subjects, the question of the human is always a political

⁹ For example, with invention of tele-communication system and the internet, and with its modern products, such as social media and ecommerce platform, people are easily brought together via (phone/pad/computer) screen. Namely, the world and our experience of it become more accessible for us.

priority.¹⁰ Traditional philosophy ascribes politics to be the ‘unfortunate’ human condition of plurality to the necessity to live with others (EU, 429). For Arendt, however, the necessity of politics is to protect the wellbeing of plural human beings who are themselves transcendental beings with the darkness of the human heart, who have speechless wonder, who have the capacity to build and sustain a world through labour, work and action, who are capable of caring for the world through loving, speaking, remembering and augmenting. All those capacities are potentially powerful and meaningful and therefore articulatable and presentable (constantly innovative) within the realm of human affairs – the subject matter of politics.

In this thesis, I shall therefore follow in Arendt’s footsteps by re-examining the transcendental dimension of human existence regarding what causes “our newest experiences and our most recent fears” as a mode of dehumanization. After all, I contend that, to be dehumanized is to lose the capacity to world (to use Arendt’s invention of the verb). I shall draw attention to a fuller picture of Arendt’s concept of the human being, by introducing a new way of understanding that the human as transcending earthly and biological existence: a transcendence which is rooted in human history. Significantly, I shall demonstrate how the transcendental characteristics of human being provides an insightful perspective from which to appreciate what animated Arendt’s political thought that to be human at all is a political imperative. Unlike the Kantian categorical imperative as an absolute and unconditional legislative foundation upon which human beings are morally established, I shall argue that, Arendt’s political imperative was anchored within meaningful yet conditional human existence as the immanent capacity to world.

The concept of ‘capacity’ cannot be read as something like a quality, feature

¹⁰ Even the philosophical homesickness for the world can be analysed, in modern circumstances, as a political phenomenon. See, for example, VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. KATTAGO, S. 2013. Why the World Matters: Hannah Arendt’s Philosophy of New Beginnings. *The European Legacy*, 18, 170–184.

or component of what it means to be human. We understand Aristotle's definition of human as *zoon echon logon* to define *logos* ('speech', 'argument' or 'reason') as a capacity of human beings. Rather, I shift my focus from debates between nature and condition to analyse capacity. We are familiar with Arendt's rejection of human 'nature' and her preference for the human 'condition', such as life itself, birth, death, worldliness, plurality and the earth.¹¹ These conditions can "never condition us absolutely", according to Arendt, whereas "those general human capacities" – such as speech, action, thinking, remembering and loving – can capacitate us absolutely (HC, 6).¹²

In view of this, I try to avoid saying that transcendence is a 'nature' of human beings but rather, a capacity (a capability or a carrier) of 'being' human. In so doing, I turn the question of the human as a 'what' into 'being' as a 'way' of being. In other words, I seek to emphasize the 'being' rather than 'human'. To be human is to world; to world is to transcend. It is in this way that I call the way of being as worlding as well as transcending in order to fully appreciate the transcendental dimension of human being as the capacity to world as a way to access the existential ground in Arendt's works.

In this context, it is necessary to focus on Arendt's concern for the circumstances which produce dehumanization as the de-worlding of the human, in which there is nobody but labourers and consumers. Dehumanization does not affect personality, human nature or anything which can be measured or valued against the standard of the social/behavioural sciences. Rather, it entails a full-scale loss of the power to world. In particular, our new technologies are dehumanizing the world or de-worlding the human, by abandoning the transcendental dimension of human, the perceivable yet ineffable human experiences which constitute human being, and thereby disempowering the

¹¹ Quite often, condition is understood as a limitation, a prerequisite; it is something similar to a metaphysical/categorical inspecting, to define something through determining the qualification, the finitude and the boundary line.

¹² Arendt maintained in *The Human Condition* that, "I confine myself ... to an analysis of those general human capacities which grow out of the human condition and are permanent, that is, which cannot be irretrievably lost so long as the human condition itself is not changed."

human capacity to gain access to the transcendental dimension of our own being, to relate to others, to establish relationships, to build a world, and care for and sustain what we build. Such is the human capacity to world which I am describing; that modern human existence is at a loss due to the abandoning and disempowering. It should be noted that it is necessary to distinguish between human capacity as something which we can never irreversibly lose and the human power which can be disempowered in the modern world (I shall explore this idea in Chapter 5); so capacity is something permanent and can never be irreversibly lost whilst power can be disempowered in particular circumstances.

Research questions

In this thesis, I inquire into what it meant for Arendt to be human at all. To pursue this over-arching question, I shall address three sub-questions:

1. How does the phenomenological concept of 'world' inform Arendt's transcendental understanding of human being?
2. In what sense does Arendt understand this transcendental aspect of being human to be a political imperative?
3. How does Arendt conceptualize some of the fundamental political 'experiences' of transcendence which are integral to being human?

To address the question of the human in Arendt, it is first necessary to understand how and why the phenomenological concept of 'world' is presented as a 'transcendental horizon' in Arendt's work. To do this, we need to examine the influence which Heidegger had on her thinking.

Second, in order to appraise transcendence as embedded within the practical horizon of human existence, we need to reconsider Arendt's attitude toward the relationship between philosophy and politics (LM, I:212).¹³ To do this, we should

¹³ As she claimed in the interview with Gaus. And she "clearly joined the ranks of those who for some time now have been attempting to dismantle metaphysics, and philosophy with all its categories, as we have known them from the beginning in Greece until today." HULL, M. B. 2003. *The Hidden Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, Taylor & Francis e-Library., DISCH, L. J. 1994. *Hannah Arendt and the Limits of Philosophy*, Cornell

be very careful not to compromise the philosophical complexity of the term and at the same time make the issue of transcendence more profound in politics.

Third, to recognize how Arendt interpreted the transcendental dimension of human through fundamental experiences, we need see how she recovered this from classical political thought. I shall therefore examine how Arendt drew attention to the transcendental aspect of human being not only through the Greek concepts of *logos* and *polis*, which were fundamental to Aristotle's understanding of the human being as *zoon politikon* and *zoon echon logon*, but also through the Roman concepts of *amor mundi* and *auctoritas*, which were fundamental to her political philosophy. I shall next elaborate on each of the methodological steps in my research.

Methodology

First, to work out how Arendt's conception of 'world' as an existential horizon plays a decisive role in defining, describing and defending the transcendental dimension of the human, I shall look at Arendt's phenomenological approach to the world in comparison with that of traditional metaphysics.

Quite decisively, in her interview with Gunther Gaus for German television in 1964, Arendt referred to the world as a "space in which one lives and which must look presentable" (EU, 25). The problem is how to present the world with its metaphysically determined system of knowledge and language, for the simple reason that, inevitably, our language, by which we navigate this world and conduct our thinking and speaking, is dominated and limited by the metaphysical categorical system. Within the system, there are realms of ineffability which we simply describe as inexplicable because language does not allow us to think and speak outside our established categories. The inaccessibility of particular areas was pre-determined by the two-world theory from Plato to Augustine: a world of

University Press., CANOVAN, M. 1990. Socrates or Heidegger? Hannah Arendt's Reflections on Philosophy and Politics. *Social Research*, 135-165., D'ENTRÈVES, M. P. 2002. *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, Routledge.

ideal/divinity and a world of imitation/secular. Allegedly, we must keep silent about the ideal and divinity – the old perception of the ‘transcendental realm’.

At this critical juncture of presenting the world as the horizon of transcendental human existence with metaphysically framed language, I turn to Heidegger and trace his influence on Arendt’s understanding of the world.¹⁴ Indeed, Heidegger’s concept of *dasein* and being-in-the-world provided unlimited inspiration for Arendt. The notion of ‘world’ is explicitly explicated in *Being and Time*, sections 14-18; the term ‘transcendence’ was most frequently used by Heidegger from the late 1920s to the early 1930s, when Arendt was his student. To trace this influence, I turn to Heidegger to see how he sought to solve the problem of traditional metaphysics, and his characterization of the world as the existential horizon of transcendence.

‘World’, for Heidegger, is the structural and referential whole of significant relationships and human experiences as being-in-the-world – with natural things, tools and other human beings. ‘World’ is the familiar horizon with which human beings are comfortable and confidently move around in their everyday life. ‘World’ designates the transcendence, the “essential mystery of existence” which enables human beings to disclose themselves to the truth of being, a genuine openness (BW, 141). To ‘be there’ (*da-sein*) simply means to be in the world. To present the phenomenal world, Heidegger focused on the study of non-sensory ‘seeing’ or intuiting and offered a new interpretation of the transcendence of human existence inasmuch as human existence is itself something above metaphysical categorisation.

As I shall show in Chapter 2, although Arendt dismissed the two-world theory, she still valued the visible/invisible distinction. The visible world of appearance constitutes our dwelling place as well as the invisible public sphere as space in-between. As the realm of *vita activa*, the world is depicted through the metaphor

¹⁴ In *Heidegger at Eighty*, Arendt described Heidegger’s project with metaphysics as a return to the “doctrine of univocity of being”.

of a stage which is set up between human interaction and inter-relations. Furthermore, as a conceptual tool, world also provides a hermeneutic interpretation as a 'meaningful context' in Arendt's existential study of human being. That is, world as a transcendental horizon belongs to the supersensible, which is only phenomenologically demonstrable. In particular, the world is made tangible by the 'lifeblood' of human activities in pursuing a space of meaning.

Second, to work out the transcendental aspect of human being with the immediate practical horizon of politics in Arendt, it is necessary first to consider a clear tension in Arendt's thought. Although for Arendt philosophers are particularly fond of transcendence beyond human existence, they are looking in the wrong direction, from a place outside the world looking inward.¹⁵ Being part of what it means to be human, the desire for a solid place of belonging in the world is an old philosophical disease.¹⁶ For philosophers, 'home' is only metaphysically or ontologically attainable: they are searching for a home above or over the world of appearances in order to establish a safe harbour within the human mind. This was Arendt's relentless quest to recover a sense of a defining political feature of human life. Given Arendt's strong philosophical background, we have to admit that in order to understand what she meant by 'politics', an adequate understanding of philosophy is necessarily crucial. For example, at the beginning of *The Human Condition*, Arendt characterized the Greek perception of the *polis* as being intertwined with and opposed to the creation of the philosopher, who holds the superior insight toward "the whole utopian reorganization of polis life" which also aims at protecting the "philosopher's way of life" (HC, 14).

Throughout this thesis, I shall examine how Arendt instead sought to reconcile the philosophical 'not of this world' with the political 'of this world'. As Hans-Joerg Sigwart observed, Arendt engaged in a "multi-contextual horizon" of

¹⁵ See *The Human Condition* for how the Archimedean view point was set outside the global earth and how this is happening inside the philosopher's mind.

¹⁶ KATTAGO, S. 2013. Why the World Matters: Hannah Arendt's Philosophy of New Beginnings. *The European Legacy*, 18, 170–184.. Philosophy is homesickness for Novalis.

“many different political worlds in time and space”, namely, a ‘wandering’ type of political theorizing¹⁷ and even the philosophical homesickness for the world is, in modern circumstances, more of a political phenomenon.¹⁸ Politics creates space for dialogue, rather than monologue; politics arises only between different people; the trenchant yet dialectical thought is that “man is apolitical” (HC, 95). But rather than rest content with understanding action as immanent to worldly existence, I shall emphasize how the political imperative starts in speechless wonder at human plurality as sheer togetherness and the capacity to act, as the phenomenal basis of transcendence.

Third, in order to understand how Arendt looked for the fundamental experiences which might inform us about the transcendental dimension of human being, we need to consider why she turned to Greek and Roman political thought to recover them. Indeed, Arendt’s philosophical method is called “conceptual analysis” in an effort to find “where concepts come from”. Like the “rhetorical contest, the *agon* of words”, the original meaning matters because, as Dolf Sternberger put it, “a renewal of the concept and the conception” reminds us of the “ethos and the pathos of things political”.¹⁹ Indeed, introduced as a kind of ‘retrieving’, Arendt’s interpretation of politics is characterized as the lost treasure of the western tradition and re-evaluated within a comprehensive history of classical political thought from Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Augustine.²⁰

However, Arendt did not just lament the lost treasure of tradition, she also celebrated it. The effort which Arendt made to go back to Greek and Roman classical thinking was based on her full awareness that the break in tradition

¹⁷ SIGWART, H.-J. 2016. *The Wandering Thought of Hannah Arendt*, London, Palgrave Macmillan.

¹⁸ See, for example, VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. KATTAGO, S. 2013. Why the World Matters: Hannah Arendt’s Philosophy of New Beginnings. *The European Legacy*, 18, 170–184.

¹⁹ STERNBERGER, D. 1977. The Sunken City: Hannah Arendt’s Idea of Politics. *Social Research*, 44, 132-146.

²⁰ Arendt called this oscillation the first fallacy, to look at *vita activa* from *vita contemplativa*; and she still saw the politics through the lens of the philosophy. In other words, to legitimize the political from the philosophical, or to legitimize politics through philosophy. BUCKLER, S. 2011. *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory: Challenging the Tradition*, 22 George Square, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press Ltd, YOUNG-BRUEHL, E. & ARENDT, H. 1982. *For love of the world*.

offers us chances to discover the past anew, which is manifested in her metaphor of “diving for pearls and corals”.²¹ This is not about recovering the past *per se*; it also suggests that elements of the past might have undergone a ‘sea change’ and that violence might be done in wrenching them away – as Arendt did in her very one-sided portrait of the *polis* (Chapter 6) and in her implicit phenomenological engagement with Heidegger’s retrieval of *logos* (Chapter 4). Young-Bruehl rightly commented that Arendt theoretically shifted among concepts or phenomena toward tradition: moving from genuinely negative radical criticism to an effort to find positive elements. On the one hand, Arendt rejected all the accepted verities of political philosophy and was determined to salvage only the lost treasures of the tradition – treasures ignored in *praxis* and almost completely lost from theory. On the other hand, however, she shifted her stance toward the tradition by using positive elements to conduct her radical critique.²² Apart from lamenting the lost treasure caused by the break in tradition, Arendt also celebrated many remarkable worldly events and achievements of the modern world, from the American revolution to the workers’ movements of the nineteenth centuries and to civil obedience in the 1960s.

Henceforth, I set the tone of the whole thesis which is driven by a modern reminiscence of loss, not in a nostalgic way, but in the sense that we inherit the tradition but without testament – a conceptual gap. Importantly, at the same time, I follow in Arendt’s footsteps in discovering the past anew. So in order to understand Arendt’s conception of the human as the capacity to world, I shall reconstruct her method of conceptual retrieval in relation to four key concepts: *logos*, *polis*, *amor mundi* and *auctoritas*, each of which might contain insights into how the Greeks and Romans experienced what it is to be human.²³

²¹ In Arendt’s essay on Benjamin in *Men in Dark Times*.

²² YOUNG-BRUEHL, E. & ARENDT, H. 2004. *For Love of the World*, Yale University Press New Haven London. p. 262.

²³ With these concepts, I shall trace Arendt’s theoretical sources from both Heidegger and Roman antiquity. Admittedly, these concepts may not be as timely relevant or theoretically productive, even not interesting compared with contested political concepts such as freedom, power (as opposed to violence), justice or democracy, although they are the only feasible living evidence which enables us to make better sense of what inspired, influenced and shaped Arendt’s understanding of human being. That said, the choice of the

In order to grasp the transcendental basis of her political thinking, I shall investigate how Arendt looked to the classical world in order to recover some fundamental experiences of being human. Obviously, Arendt still had faith in the human capacity to carry the ancient wisdom of our ancestors from Greek and Roman thinking. She still trusted the wisdom of the original meaning of concepts as well as the life experiences which gave rise to the meanings. I shall therefore examine two Greek concepts, *logos* and *polis*, given their centrality to Arendt's political thinking, for instance, her analysis of the dehumanization of stateless people in *The Origin of Totalitarianism* and her account of the human capacity to world in *The Human Condition* and *The Life of the Mind*.

The problem is that the traditional metaphysical definition of human is a degradation which starts when we try to understand human by referring to animal. When the Romans translated the Greek concept of human, *zoon echon logon* and *zoon politikon*, into Latin as *animal rationale* and *animal socialis*,²⁴ the human descended from 'being' to 'animal.' The question of the human is always circling around, say, what kind of 'animal', instead of what kind of 'being', human is. This is the main reason why, I believe, Heidegger was so convinced that we have long forgotten the impulse to ask the question about being.²⁵ More thought-provokingly, the modern world, which is being dehumanized by fast-developing technology, not only fails to recognize but also accelerates and enhances the descent of human from 'being' to 'animal.'

I therefore take a different approach from the traditional metaphysical definition of the human as animal-plus-the-capacity-to-speak, in comparison with other gregarious social animals such as bees. Rather, I see these two aspects of *logos* and *polis* as ways of worlding. In other words, I understand the

conceptual is never random; the multiple meanings of *logos* and *polis* are lost, and *amor mundi* and *auctoritas* were sending misleading messages.

²⁴ According to traditional metaphysics, such degradation is inevitable because humans share commensurable facts with 'animal' and, plus-animals belongs to the lower dimension. And the degradation is understandable, because animal as a genre is visible, referable, graspable, predictable and even controllable.

²⁵ The problem is basically methodological, however.

transcendental dimension of the human capacity to world through *logos* and *polis*, which simply and solely designate the humanly way of transcending. I turn to Arendt, who synthesized, translated and interpreted Aristotle's two-fold definition of man as a political being "endowed with the power of speech", or "speech makes man a political being". (HC, 4) In fact, for Arendt, "*logos* and *polis* supplement each other and both refer to the same experience in Greek polis life" (HC, 153). That is to say, for the Greeks, what distinguished human being from animals and barbarians was *logos*; and insofar as man "has the faculty of speech, the power to understand, to make himself understood, and to persuade", he is political. (HC, 4) Tentatively, I shall examine how, for Arendt, *logos* is what human *is* and *polis* allows human to *be* at all.

Despite the obvious importance of *logos* and *polis* for Arendt's understanding of human being, I shall also examine the fundamental place which two Roman concepts have in Arendt's understanding of human being: *amor mundi* and *auctoritas*. I shall therefore explore how Arendt turned away from Heidegger's philhellenic tendency and turned to, with a novel perspective, Roman antiquity. In Heidegger's view, the rootlessness of western thought originated from the Roman translations from Greek (OWR, 149). Thus, I shall examine *amor mundi* since it is a formative concept in Arendt's entire intellect and biographical life. In her doctoral thesis on Augustine's concept of 'love', Arendt addressed an intrinsically human characteristic, the capacity to be with others. I shall explore how *amor mundi* is a contradiction in terms which presents a challenge and an opportunity to unlock her deliberate ambiguity. To be human is to love; love requires a transcendental commitment to human existence (rather than otherworldly divinity), as human being rather than human kind as a species. To be human is to love, and worldly love is dialectically transcendental in the sense that building fences and barriers is the prerequisite of the human capability to love, as a way to 1) secure freedom which is conditional, 2) release the uncertainty and frailty of human action from the chain of unending causality, and 3) promise a future which must be durable and permanent, in other words, relatively transcendental.

I shall then turn to Arendt's understanding of *auctoritas* given how central this concept became in her later works, such as *On Revolution*, in which she was

preoccupied with the problem of creating freedom-preserving institutions. The source of *auctoritas*, for the Romans, was not from something high above, but originated from the depth of human existence. In the traditional concept of authority, for Arendt, the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle had failed to provide a conceptual basis for authority and almost created the prejudice and misunderstanding in western tradition, whereas the Greeks (and moderns) were seeking the legitimacy of the source of authority from outside and beyond, transcendence as absoluteness. The Romans esteemed the human capacity to 'augment' their past: the founding of the Rome. *Auctoritas* therefore shows us a different mode of transcending: human existence as the carrier of 'time': men carry on what they inherited from their Greek ancestors and carry it forward. Their respect for the Senate and for old age is a sign of how they valued humans as carriers of time: the older you are, the closer to the ancestors you are and the more time you have lived. In other words, metaphorically, the human being is the container of time and time is where the depth of human existence is anchored.

In order to reconstruct Arendt's encounter with classical texts and concepts, I shall examine how her appropriation of *amor mundi*, *logos*, *polis* and *auctoritas* was carried out in an hermeneutic way. Following Heidegger, hermeneutics is all about the way of interpreting, and the "hermeneutics of facticity" refers to the tracing of the genesis of human experience. As Heidegger outlined in his *Letter on Humanism*, thinking does not 'make' or 'cause' the relation of being to the essence of man, but rather accomplishes the relation by 'handing over' to language. Hermeneutics traces the original life experiences which gave rise to the first naming moment. Hermeneutics is such a 'handing over', which is to say that the meaningfulness of concepts is to be sought within a context. The Heideggerian hermeneutic interpretation of a judgment such as 'The flower is beautiful', must be dealt with in a context such as 'I am walking in a garden in springtime'.²⁶ For Heidegger, hermeneutics seeks meanings and authentic

²⁶ SLAMA, P. 2018. *Heidegger et le Logos Apophantikos. Herméneutique du Langage Ordinaire. Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 98, 241-260. Slama wrote that "phenomenology thought of as hermeneutics associates itself with the philosophy of norms to describe ordinary language".

experiences from language. Language is the house of being and human is the housekeeper. Language tells us what to think, how we think. Without language, we could not think.

In sum, methodologically I shall seek solutions to these questions through three steps. First, I shall investigate Heidegger's influence on Arendt, to reconstruct a conception of the world as a transcendental horizon. Second, I shall examine Arendt's perpetual theoretical struggle between politics and philosophy in order to capture the transcendence, a word tainted with traditional residues. Third, I shall reconstruct Arendt's hermeneutical interpretation of four Greek and Roman political concepts (*logos*, *polis*, *amor mundi* and *auctoritas*) which exemplify Arendt's tireless concern for the ineffability of human capacity as pure existence, fragile yet tenacious.

Statement of the thesis

The key claim of this thesis is that, for Arendt, the human being is a meta being with the capacity to world. Let me explain what I mean by this in two steps: First, what is a 'meta being'? Second, what is 'the capacity to world'?

First, what is a meta being? In this thesis, I designate the impenetrability of the realm where categorical thinking cannot reach as the meta dimension of human being. Following Heidegger, as I shall discuss in Chapter 1, 'meta' has a double sense: the transcendental (*meta-physika*) dimension of human being, and who is capable of 'carrying over' (*meta-pherein*) the ineffable into the visible and perceivable.

Traditionally, transcendence addresses two ontological puzzles: absoluteness and ineffableness. Absoluteness refers to the Platonic ideals, the Aristotelian unmovable mover, the omnipresent and omniscient God, or the One. However, the absolute perspective is not valid in the "intrinsically relative realm of human affairs" – the political realm. The ineffableness refers to something which the thinker can never say because "the spoken word receives its

determination from the ineffable”²⁷ (LM, I:115). What lies at the centre of the ineffableness is the concern for language: we think and speak in language. Sometimes, our language does not allow us to think forward within some ‘mysterious’ areas which are categorized by metaphysics as ‘transcendental’ (LM, I:115).²⁸

In this thesis, ‘transcendence’ does not mean that we have some sort of transcendental need beyond the material or spiritual needs for food, shelter, faith or art, or something which can provide our sustenance and wellbeing. Nor is it the traditional horizon of transcendence which is based on a fundamental metaphysical two-world structure taken by the spectator’s perspective dominated by God. Rather, transcendence is constitutively already there, immanent in our own existence. In other words, human beings are transcendental in the sense that they are preservers and translators of the ineffability of human experiences, great or ordinary.

For this reason, I use the meta dimension to deepen our understanding of human existence because traditionally, peeking into what is beyond sensibility or human experience is a kind of overstepping, a leaping beyond (*meta*-).²⁹ The significance of the phenomenological approach to the meta dimension of the human is that phenomenologists notice that what really matters is the unnoticeable stepping-stone which is bypassed by traditional philosophers and so easily ignored in our everyday routine. In other words, what we take for granted as the basis for overstepping, the overlooked stepping-stone determines the human experiences which provide entry into what is empirically impenetrable but phenomenologically demonstrable.

In contrast to Heidegger’s explicit characterization of the finitude of

²⁷ Arendt quoted from Heidegger’s *Nietzsche*, Pfullingen, 1961, vol, II, p. 484.

²⁸ And according to Wittgenstein, “whose philosophical investigations center on the ineffable in a relentless effort to say what the case may be”; and for whom, the philosophical problems “arise when language goes on a holiday.” And the ‘relentless effort’ to present what the ineffable may be is the primacy of philosophers.

²⁹ “In overstepping the sensible,” as Heidegger said, metaphysics as pure, rational knowledge of what is common to all beings “seeks to grasp supersensible being.” HEIDEGGER, M. 1997. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. TAFT, R., Indiana University Press.

transcendence as being-in-the-world in *da-sein*'s temporality as care, Arendt explored how this transcendence is actualized through a political mode of existence. Heidegger understood how mortal human beings ontologically transcend with regard to how human existence is already 'beyond'.³⁰ Arendt accepted that transcendence is a different notion which in some way is constituted with the human insofar as we are both agents and sufferers of our own actions, both actors and spectators of the narrative of our life story.³¹ Transcendence is unique to human beings.

Second, what is 'the capacity to world'? Following Arendt, we can recognize the human capacity to world as a free gift from 'nowhere'. The invented verb 'to world' describes the potential to translate or bridge from nowhere, as human beings' free endowment, to somewhere; from nothing to something and from nobody to somebody. 'Capacity', in this thesis, therefore has a double sense as both *capability* and *carrier*: as capability because human beings are capable of loving (*amor mundi*) and speaking (*logos*); and as carrier because human existence is the space of appearances and remembrance (*polis*), and the augmenting of time itself (*auctoritas*).

Arendt regarded 'world' as something towards which human beings transcend, either above the earth or beyond biological existence. 'To world' thus means both to build a world by staying, living and dwelling alongside the world, and on the other hand, to sustain a world by cultivating, tending to and caring for the world.³² Through the process of building and caring, we learn to love the world of differences, confrontations, struggles, strife, disputes and conflict, not for the sake of reconciliation, but to be human at all.

In short, the human being is a meta being with the capacity to world because of building and caring for the world towards which human beings are capable of

³⁰ The world is the universal horizon rather than the object of consciousness: what a hammer is, is constituted in *hammering*.

³¹ Human beings are conditioned by their own existence and in turn are condition makers.

³² The two senses of worlding were inspired by and appropriated from Heidegger's 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking' in *Poetry, Language, Thought*. pp, 144-45.

transcending by by-passing our local and temporal finitude as well as experiencing and presenting what is ineffable.

Outline of the thesis

This thesis is organized in three parts. In the first part, I shall outline Arendt's understanding of the human capacity to world by providing a preliminary interpretation of her political thought as a development of Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology. This first part provides the interpretive framework for the following conceptual analysis in which I shall examine the two-fold sense of the capacity to world as capability (in part II) and as carrier (in part III). In the second part of the thesis, I shall discuss two constitutive capacities which make us human: the capability to love (*amor mundi*) and to speak (*logos*). In the third part, I shall address the other sense of capacity: being humans as carriers of *polis* and *auctoritas*.

In Chapter 1, I consider the most important secondary literature which has discussed the theoretical relationship between Arendt and Heidegger. In particular, I show Arendt's indebtedness to, critical stances against and overcoming of Heidegger. In the first section, I highlight how Arendt was indebted to Heidegger, regarding a method interwoven with her understanding of his phenomenology and existential ontology. In the second section, I demonstrate how readers understand Arendt's critique of Heidegger in terms of his contemplative tendency and his over-focus on human mortality as being-toward-death. Within the existing literature, I briefly explain how these two critiques of Heidegger can be plausibly justified by appealing to Arendt's conception of plurality. In the third section, I show how Arendt sought to overcome the problems which she identified. In particular, I show how Arendt overcame her teacher through 1) transforming Heidegger's famous *Seinsfrage* ('Why is there something rather than nothing?') into a question of nobodyness ('Why is there somebody rather than nobody?'), and 2) departing from her teacher by appealing to Roman antiquity regarding the Roman political thought which was derived from its political experience. In the light of this review of the scholarly debates about Arendt's relation to Heidegger, in the fourth section, I begin to show how Arendt's

Heideggerian understanding of the human capacity for transcendence is a fundamental, albeit often overlooked, aspect of her political thought. Adding to the literature, I shall therefore show how we could examine the idea of transcendence within Arendt's own writing through the lens of Heidegger, and how situating Heideggerian interpretation of the significance of transcendence within Arendt's conception of the human in relation to scholarly debates would help us see her political philosophy in a new light. I draw attention to her interest in the idea of 'transcendence' and how she relates and places this very ontological and theological idea underneath the construction of her political theory.

In Chapter 2, I shall discuss modern existential anxiety and the ineffable dimension of human existence in order to indicate the importance of recognizing the transcendental aspect of being human. To do this, I shall demonstrate how Arendt remained pre-occupied with the instinct of metaphysical thinking, not in the traditional way, but rather in an Heideggerian, namely, hermeneutic phenomenological way. Heidegger's early project with the fate of metaphysics, regarding the "forgetfulness of being" and disorientation, was rooted in a traditionalized and solidified metaphysics. He was therefore determined to restore the openness and questionableness which are innate to the essence of metaphysics, as well as the human. When interpreted in this context, we can see that the question of the human is, for Arendt, not a political priority, not even a general scientific task, but more of a matter of philosophical wonder. Dedicated to retrieving human being from antiquity and at the same time working hard to eschew the traditional metaphysical way of thinking, Arendt's understanding of the human remains fundamentally transcendental.

In Chapter 3, I demonstrate how Arendt understood the modern loss of the world, not only as a political narrative based on her observation of modern phenomena, but also as a philosophical reflection. In both senses, the loss of the world has become a matter of emergency because we can lose the world without noticing that we are losing it. I reconstruct how Heidegger rebelled against the traditional epistemological and phenomenological approach to the concept of world as *umwelt* and *es weltet*. Phenomenology presupposes a world which I share with others but with differences marked out by fences and walls. To world

therefore describes such dynamic interactions as Heidegger's implementation of the world with an existential ontological capacity. In the phenomenological sense, the world you see, experience and suffer is through your own sense organs as mirrors, based on your own personality, identity, perspective and horizon. I shall demonstrate how for Arendt, to be human was to world by interpreting her account of the activity of labour.

In Chapter 4, I analyse the theoretical tension within the concept of *amor mundi*. I shall show how the famous call for us to 'love the world' or *amor mundi*, is a contradiction in terms in Arendt's own conceptual and theoretical scaffolding. The human capacity to love is exclusively unworldly because love is apolitical. I shall therefore conduct an analysis similar to Arendt's challenges to Augustine's love of the neighbour: 1) to have neighbours and 2) to love them. In a similar vein, I shall explore the theoretical possibility 1) to have a world and then 2) to love the world. As a modern phenomenon, from dweller/lover to maker/master/conqueror, world alienation is also characterised by the reversal of man's position ever since man set foot in the bottomless and fathomless universe. Thus, the loss of the world is twofold: the loss of loved ones and the loss of the ability to love. The conceptual paradox shows that love and world are co-constitutive. So what is the difference between this modern love and Augustinian theological love? The main difference is that instead of advocating universal or global concepts such as world citizenship or cosmopolitanism, modern love accentuates and strengthens differences with walls, fences and laws. Higher walls respect, separate and protect the boundaries and frontiers of different nations, ethnicities and religions; minor fences respect and guarantee different people with different nationalities, skin colours, ethics, sexual orientations and so on.

In Chapter 5, I examine the human capability to speak as a way of transcending by radicalizing the divergence of 'human speech' and 'logic' in *logos*. To do this, I shall turn to the rich implications of Heidegger's retrieval of the Greek concept of *logos*, mainly focusing on the original meaning and the human experiences of early Greek thinking. I shall also show that Heidegger's project with *logos* was a double movement of restoring the original understanding of *logos* as 'ineffableness' (or 'authentic obscurity') and his later project of the

reconstruction of logic.³³ I then discuss Arendt's observation of the political exigency of the modern loss of human speech and how human speech has been replaced by scientific language based on logic (administrative orders, symbols and computer languages). I show that the downfall of spontaneous human speech accompanies the fading horizon of the world of appearances and I distinguish between speaking as the unchanging human capability to speak and the power of speech as something we can lose in the modern age. To emphasize the significance of the phenomenal world to human speech, I suggest that Arendt implicitly reconciled the divergence between 'human speech' and 'logic' into one again, namely, *logos* as 'reasoned speech'. In doing this, I shall present the dilemma of meaning that *logos* is not prompted by the thirst for knowledge (logic), but by the quest for meaning (human speech) (LM, I:100). Intriguingly, the question is how mortal and finite human existence is capable of obtaining meaning without appealing to the substantial ground of transcendence which is above the sensible world. To answer this question, I locate transcendence within human existence, and the meaning is self-generated, not borrowed from something outside or beyond. Building on the ongoing discussion of the divergence within *logos*, I describe three ways of worlding as transcending through speaking: humans as *meta* beings with the (ontological) speechless wonder, the (existential) capacity to speak and the (phenomenological) urge to be heard.

In Chapter 6, I examine human existence as a carrier of the space of appearance and remembrance: the human capacity to world. I first reconsider Arendt's ambivalence toward the Greek concept of the *polis*. I examine the decisive question of the human against the background of modern technology which brings about the loss of *polis* as the withering away of public space. I then show Heidegger's pre-political interpretation of *polis* as an historical site around which things, as well as humans, could *be* at all. Based on the story of *Er* (messenger) and the metaphor of *lethe* (forgetting) as night, the etymological

³³ As Heidegger wrote, "the saying is rather an assertion about the equal participation of both in the realm of the *nonsensible*." (73)

relation between *aletheia* and *lethe* shows that the truth (*aletheia*) of *polis* is the site of un-forgetting (*a-lethe*). That is to say, the essence of *polis* is the site of history as long as human beings are capable of remembering. Indeed, Arendt developed these Heideggerian insights by theorizing the human condition within a well-structured political context, the mechanical system of the *polis*, the private and public space, which allows human to be at all. I therefore investigate how *polis* presents the site of human existence upon which Arendt built her political theory. In view of this, I reinterpret *polis* as a space of appearance and a space of remembrance, in accordance with the two-fold function that Arendt designated to *polis*. Finally, because both spaces are anchored in the existence of humans as both recipients and providers who secure the functioning of the *polis*, I study the constitutive human capacities of acting and shining, witnessing and memorizing. Instead of comprehending *polis* in a positive and passive sense, I take *polis* with the distinctive capacity of being the carrier of *polis*.

In the final chapter, I further explore the human capacity to world as the carrier of time by exploring the *meta* dimension of the human from the Roman concept of *auctoritas*. Human being is *meta* being in the sense that human existence itself is the capacity to world. Where do the *polis* and *auctoritas* reside? In human beings themselves. I reconstruct and visualize how time operated in the Roman word and how Romans understood the concept of *auctoritas* in the trinity of authority, religion and tradition. Authority as a concept in Arendt's major works either focuses on the sources of authority or questions the legitimacy of the sources; but to problematize the sources or legitimacy of authority itself is a mode of metaphysical rationality. Thus, between explicating the modern pathological loss of authority and the attempt even to define the concept, there is an insoluble metaphysical dilemma. Arendt therefore turned to the Roman political experience with the concept of *auctoritas* as augmentation. Arendt particularized and exemplified the role that the elders and the Senate (literally a group of old men) played in the Roman political experience: the Senate and its authority relied on the elders and the aged, who not only accumulated time and experience within themselves, but also were believed to be closer to the ancestors. I therefore explicate Arendt's existential ontological aspect of authority both as a concept and as genuine understanding and experience. When

illustrating the awkwardness of this situation, concern for the past does not hinge on metaphysical rationality but on the depth of human existence which is anchored in the past or in tradition. As augmenting, *auctoritas* means to build upon, building layer by layer, not upwardly, but more like the timeline that is horizontally stretches deep down into the past – to the foundation of human depth. For Arendt, the loss of authority was the loss of human depth, which is augmented by or built upon the temporality of human existence as a collective whole – our tradition and our history, namely, the past. Thus the loss of authority means that there is no testimony and no human capacity to initiate, inherit, witness, memorize, augment or preserve a city; namely, the loss of human. To be human is to *auctor*, to augment, to contribute as capacity, as a carrier of time by remembering the past. To be human requires a world-building capacity, to augment the capacity to remember, to bear, to suffer, to endure, to agonize, to strive and to promise a future, to be part and parcel of the living city, the *polis*, to inherit and pass down.

Contribution to knowledge

The research question which I set out earlier by asking 'What did it mean, for Arendt, to be human at all' has been an abiding question throughout history and was obviously a central question for Arendt. In this thesis, I go beyond that question by proposing a novel interpretation since previous scholarship on Arendt's conception of the human has primarily focused on how the modern human condition is jeopardized by scientific and technological development, centring on her discussion of human activities, the modern glorification of labour, the rise of the social, stateless people and human rights. We have tended to neglect Arendt's emphasis on the transcendental aspect of being human, which describes the capacity for the achievement of worlding as 'carrying over' or making visible the ineffable experience of being human (which I discuss in chapter 5 & 6). Furthermore, although we have recognized the centrality of speaking and being together with others in a polity as central to being human, we have neglected the Roman aspects of loving and augmenting (which I explore in chapter 4 & 7).

What I bring to light in this way of reading is the depth of understanding of

the question by showing Arendt's debt to Heidegger and her appropriation and deployment of the concept of 'world'. For Heidegger, since the language we use to think and speak is hijacked by traditional metaphysics, we cannot resist the temptation to objectify the world as long as it is a noun, a concept or an entity. Even so, we can always 'world', unthinkingly or unconsciously, as we care, live, speak, love, act and remember. We can always world promptly and spontaneously before thinking. Through experiencing while we world, we can escape from the metaphysical fetters. It is therefore significant to recognize the key dimension of human worlding: to be human is to world. Putting it this way, I believe, clarifies Arendt's idea of the human which used to confuse us.

Furthermore, I also bring to light the transcendental aspect of Arendt's idea of the human in order to pay attention to the true exigency of modern humanity and attempt to recover a sense of being human at all. Indeed, from 'being' to 'animal' is a descent. The problem is, however, that we do not ask 'what kind of animal' humans are and we do not even ask 'what kind of being' humans are. Instead, the question should be, 'Who are we?' or 'Who am I?' The 'who-ness' is similar to the 'being' which belongs to the realm of 'God' – the transcendence. My claim is therefore that human existence is itself transcendental, and that human beings are capable of carrying across the sensible and supersensible realm and carrying over the existential finitude and metaphysical limits. I therefore ask what it meant, for both Heidegger and Arendt, to be human. I take their favourite hermeneutic phenomenological approach to the realm of God which is distinct from the theological image of God who is omnipresent or omniscient, and from the ontological grounding which is absolute and substantial. The differentiation between transcendence in hermeneutic phenomenology, theology and ontology is the thematic structure which I shall visit repeatedly throughout the thesis.

Part ONE

The Capacity to World

1 Arendt and Heidegger: Transcendence and Ineffability

Arendt's debt to Heidegger is widely recognized in terms of her phenomenological approach to the concept of world. Some see this debt in itself a problem, given the scandal of Heidegger's support for Nazism on becoming Rector of the University of Freiburg in 1933. He seen to belong to a contemplative strand of the Western philosophical tradition and therefore ignored the political claims, which Arendt made (such as plurality, natality, action, spontaneity and the public realm as a space of appearance). However, as I shall argue in this chapter, Arendt remains a phenomenological thinker, who was committed to investigating the existential-ontological dimension of the human capacity for transcendence, which is also a reason for questioning what she inherited from Heidegger.

Arendt's own political thought would never have been possible without Heidegger's influence at the early stage of her intellectual awareness which developed during and coincided with her intimate relationship with Heidegger during her study at the University of Marburg in 1924-1925.³⁴ Yet much of the Arendt/Heidegger literature is preoccupied by their personal relationship, given the established facts and ongoing debates regarding Heidegger's influence, as a teacher and a lover, in Arendt's intellectual formation. In particular, ever since the exposure by Ettinger (1995) of the correspondence (1925-1975) between them has confirmed their romantic relationship, Arendtian study has sometimes turned into an awkward integration of academic gossip and theoretical analysis substantializing and guessing the biographical trajectory of their personal relationship through mentoring, a love affair, departure, betrayal, reunion and

³⁴ For instance, CANOVAN, M. 1974. *The Political Thought of Hannah Arendt*, New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. CANOVAN, M. 1990. Socrates or Heidegger? Hannah Arendt's Reflections on Philosophy and Politics. *Social Research*, 135-165. PAREKH, B. 1981. *Hannah Arendt and the Search for a New Political Philosophy*, Atlantic Highlands, N.J: Humanities Press. YOUNG-BRUEHL, E. & ARENDT, H. 2004. *For Love of the World*, Yale University Press New Haven London. They felt certain about Heidegger's intellectual influence on Arendt; otherwise, the philosophical and political basis underneath her varied topics cannot be explained.

reconciliation.³⁵ Recently, attempts have been made to find an appropriate angle of approach to address the two great thinkers, as Jacques Derrida sought to do, “openly, fittingly, philosophically” with “due seriousness and appropriate length”.³⁶

By reviewing the scholarly debates, my aim in this chapter is to situate an under-examined theme in Arendt’s writing – the notion of transcendence – within a dialogue which discusses the extent to which Arendt is indebted to, critical of and ultimately seeks to overcome Heidegger.³⁷ I maintain that Arendt critically appropriated Heidegger’s teaching in her concept of the human regarding the existential fact (for example, being finite and mortal but thinking eternity and immortality) which conditions us but also capacitates and empowers us to build a relative permanence. In the bigger picture, the aim of the thesis is to offer a phenomenological interpretation of transcendence within Arendt’s conception of the human. In particular, there are three significant aspects of Arendt’s understanding of being human to which we need to pay attention:

1. This transcendence is no longer a transcendence as a way towards another world: it is a way of ‘being’ in the world.
2. It is not about the ‘what’ of human being, but about the ‘how’ and ultimately the ‘who’ of being human.
3. Everything Arendt has done began with but went beyond, by modifying, Heidegger.

Throughout this thesis, I therefore develop an interpretation of the human capacity for transcendence, through Heidegger, within Arendt’s political writings

³⁵ Although Ettinger’s reading might eschew a serious discussion, it invoked multiple re-evaluations of “Heidegger’s presence in Arendt’s work”, according to Michael Jones, JONES, M. T. 1998. Heidegger the Fox: Hannah Arendt’s Hidden Dialogue. *New German Critique*, 73, 164-192.

³⁶ Derrida 11 January 1995, quoted from PEETERS, B. & BROWN, A. 2013. *Derrida: a Biography*, Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA, Polity Press. 244. Also quoted by NIXON, J. 2015a. Arendt and Heidegger: The Struggle for Recognition. *Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Friendship*. 1 ed. London: Bloomsbury Academic. 41.

³⁷ See, for example, MINNICH, E. K. 2003. Arendt, Heidegger, Eichmann: Thinking in and for the World. *An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 86, 103-117, CALDARONE, R. & DEPAUL, U. 2016. “Eternity, from Afar into Intimacy”: Time and History in the Letters of Martin Heidegger to Hannah Arendt. *Philosophy today (Celina)*, 60, 927-948. MAIER-KATKIN, D. & MAIER-KATKIN, B. 2006. Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger: Calumny and the Politics of Reconciliation. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 28, 86-119.

in two distinct senses. First, the political claim declares that the human capacity for transcendence is a way of carrying over the finitude of human existence in the biological sense, to establish and preserve a relatively permanent world. Second, the ontological claim maintains that the human capacity for transcendence is a way of carrying across the cognitive and linguistic boundaries from within traditional metaphysics. The significance of the political sense of transcendence as a carrying over is widely acknowledged within Arendt scholarship, although it is not usually expressed in these terms.³⁸ However, the ontological sense of transcendence as carrying across has been largely neglected except for a few scholars, such as Dana Villa and Jacques Taminiaux.³⁹ Primarily building on their work, in this chapter I shall address a conceptual gap by demonstrating the centrality of the notion of transcendence in Arendt's appropriation of Heidegger's philosophy.⁴⁰

In the first section, I highlight how Arendt was indebted to Heidegger, regarding a method interwoven with her understanding of his phenomenology and existential ontology. In the second section, I demonstrate how readers understand Arendt's critique of Heidegger in terms of his contemplative tendency and his over-focus on human mortality as being-toward-death. Within the existing literature, I briefly explain how these two critiques of Heidegger can be plausibly justified by appealing to Arendt's conception of plurality. In the third section, I show how Arendt sought to overcome the problems which she identified. In particular, I show how Arendt overcame her teacher through 1) transforming Heidegger's famous *Seinsfrage* ('Why is there something rather than nothing?') into a question of nobodyness ('Why is there somebody rather than nobody?'), and 2) departing from her teacher by appealing to Roman antiquity regarding the Roman political thought which was derived from its political experience. In the

³⁸ See Chapter 3 and also the literature discussing Arendt's political world as one of relative permanence and durability.

³⁹ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. Villa mentions 'transcendence' at 114-115, 126, 138-139, 145-146, 148, 212. TAMINIAUX, J. 1997. *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger*, SUNY Press. 56, 62, 63, 65, 73, 77, 78.

⁴⁰ The notion of transcendence is overlooked maybe because most Arendtian readers emphasize the political dimension of the world, as opposed to the philosopher's contemplative position which overlooks human affairs and the public and political realms.

light of this review of the scholarly debates about Arendt's relation to Heidegger, in the fourth section, I begin to show how Arendt's Heideggerian understanding of the human capacity for transcendence is a fundamental, albeit often overlooked, aspect of her political thought.

1.1 Arendt's debt to Heidegger: the phenomenological approach

Arendt's debt to Heidegger is widely recognized regarding her phenomenological approach in her political thinking. I agree with Julia Kristeva who believed that Arendt appropriated and transposed Heidegger's "strategy of deconstruction of metaphysics" and his phenomenological undertaking, such as the ideas of "disclosure, unhiddenness and publicness", as well as his existential-ontological insistence on human freedom re-constructed with "finitude, contingency and the worldlessness".⁴¹ Others, such as Dana Villa and Jacques Taminiaux, have carefully reevaluated Heidegger's role in shaping Arendt's conception of world as an immanent characteristic of the human. Similar to the notion of being-in-the-world, Arendt's conception of world is characteristically and almost deliberately vague in order to create a space for an intersubjective, detached outlook on the human. Against those critics who fear the contamination of Arendt's political thought by Heidegger, I shall build on the work of those scholars who have highlighted three intertwined aspects of Heidegger's positive influence on Arendt: 1) her phenomenological approach, 2) the existential-ontological basis of her political thought, and 3) her critique of modernity.

First, the significant and implicit aspect of Arendt's indebtedness to Heidegger's phenomenology is, from my perspective, the study of the phenomenal nature of the world, which should be distinguished from another feature of the world which she described as 'worldliness' – a man-made world of 'things' which is relatively permanent. For Heidegger, phenomenology revealed the hidden character of the world as something "that proximally and for the most

⁴¹ KRISTEVA, J. 2001. *Hannah Arendt: Life is a Narrative*, trans. COLLINS, F., University of Toronto Press.

part does not show itself at all" (BT, 59).⁴² What Arendt learnt from Heidegger was the method which he used (the notion of being-in-the-world) to challenge the epistemological tradition from Descartes to Kant. As a method, Arendt's appropriation of phenomenology concerns how to understand and articulate new phenomena and experiences of the modern world when there are no precedents. That is, when the death of God or any transcendental philosophy could no longer provide certitudes, customs and norms to understand unprecedented phenomenon,⁴³ the incapacity to comprehend and articulate the unprecedented, according to Lawrence Biskoivski, would eventually result in the loss of what distinctively constitutes the being of human.⁴⁴

Second, several scholars have highlighted the existential-ontological basis of Arendt's political thought. In other words, Arendt appropriated the Heideggerian ontological phenomenology not only to analyse the existential concept of 'world', but also to conduct an implicit dialogue with Heidegger in order to highlight the underlying experience about what it means to 'be' human at all.⁴⁵ Scholars have therefore highlighted Arendt's debt to Heidegger's phenomenology regarding the significance of human experiences in and for the world. Both Maier-Katkin and Antonia Grunenburg, for instance, have acknowledged that Arendt used Heidegger's teaching to understand modern phenomena and the real world which she lived in and experienced, through the

⁴² Namely, what shows itself and what keeps hidden are neighbours in the human phenomenal world. What escapes our grasp is called 'intelligible', which is predetermined by traditional ontology and metaphysics because metaphysics presupposes what is knowable and what is thinkable so that we do not have to take the burden and risk of thinking.

⁴³ For instance, according to Natalie Nenadic, Heidegger's phenomenology assisted Arendt's critique in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, when she discovered that the fracture between our familiar concepts and the unprecedented monstrosity could fail us in fully grappling with a new phenomenon. NENADIC, N. 2013. Heidegger, Arendt, and Eichmann in Jerusalem. *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*, 5, 36-48.

⁴⁴ BISKOVSKI, L. 1995. Politics Versus Aesthetics: Arendt's Critiques of Nietzsche and Heidegger. *The Review of politics*, 57, 59-89..

⁴⁵ HINCHMAN, L. P. & HINCHMAN, S. K. 1984. In Heidegger's Shadow: Hannah Arendt's Phenomenological Humanism. *The Review of Politics*, 46, 183-211. Original italics. In particular, Arendt appropriated the distinction between existentials and categories to distance herself from traditional metaphysics and Cartesian dualism (see Chapter 1). HINCHMAN, L. P. & HINCHMAN, S. K. 1991. Existentialism Politicized: Arendt's Debt to Jaspers. *Ibid.* 53, 435-468. And *Existenz* philosophy has the function to detach the self: the word *Existenz* describes the unique self that each person may become, but which is neither (psychological) subject nor object, and likewise is not a "property with which we are endowed by nature".

breach in tradition.⁴⁶ According to Parekh, therefore, Arendt followed Heidegger's existential-ontological tendency considering that his "ontological investigation is phenomenologically oriented".⁴⁷ Villa therefore rightly concluded that there was an ontological motivation behind Arendt which transcended the "more immediately practical horizon", that is, the politics.⁴⁸ By making political claims, I believe that Arendt tried to understand Heidegger's existential concern.

Thus, third, Arendt is indebted to Heidegger in her critique of modernity insofar as she used "earth alienation" and "world alienation" to think "what we are doing" in the modern world.⁴⁹ Tracing Arendt's reluctant attitude toward modernism, Benhabib traced her conception of the world from Heidegger's philosophy.⁵⁰ Likewise, Villa directly pointed out that Arendt's conception of world was informed by Heidegger's phenomenology and existential ontology because Arendt extracted, migrated and transformed Heidegger's ontological concerns into her own anti-modernism.⁵¹ For Arendt, "modern men were not thrown back upon this world but upon themselves" (HC, 254).⁵² The "care for the self" tends to reduce all experiences into experiences between man and himself. In this regard, I agree with Yazıcıoğlu's perception that Arendt and Heidegger mutually supplemented and developed each other's notion of 'care' on the

⁴⁶ Such as, according to Maier-Katkin, it was Heidegger's phenomenology that helped Arendt to recognize the significance of human experience. MAIER-KATKIN, D. & MAIER-KATKIN, B. 2006. Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger: Calumny and the Politics of Reconciliation. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 28, 86-119, MAIER-KATKIN, D. 2010a. *Stranger from Abroad: Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, Friendship, and Forgiveness*, New York, W.W. Norton. 59. GRUNENBERG, A. & DAUB, A. 2007. Arendt, Heidegger, Jaspers: Thinking Through the Breach in Tradition. *Social Research*, 74, 1003-1028.

⁴⁷ PAREKH, B. 1981. *Hannah Arendt and the Search for a New Political Philosophy*, Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press. 81.

⁴⁸ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. 147.

⁴⁹ OWENS, P. 2012. Not Life but the World is at Stake: Hannah Arendt on Citizenship in the Age of the Social. *Citizenship Studies*, 16, 297-307.

⁵⁰ Seyla Benhabib believed that there is an ontology within *The Human Condition* which can be interpreted as a dialogue with Heidegger. The dialogue can happen given their shared or partially shared attitude toward modernity. BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. 52-53; 102.

⁵¹ In particular, Arendt appropriated the leading themes of Heidegger's critique of the modernity "out of the fear", for example "the subjectification of the real", the "de-worlding of the world" and the "technological dis-essencing of our disclosive capacity". Villa maintained that his desire was "not to place Arendt in Heidegger's shadow; rather, it is to reveal the way she extracts novel and unexpected political implications from a critique mired in cultural conservatism". VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press.

⁵² So Arendt not only turned to Heidegger and his phenomenological approach and developed her critique of modernity in a broader sense, but also, more specifically, saw how human experience is caged because of the modern mentality of self-caring.

phenomenological-existential level.⁵³

Unlike Heidegger, whose concern was the modern reduction of profoundly rich human experiences into relatively flat language, Arendt gave priority to our living reality in a modern labouring and consuming society. For her, what was at stake was “not life but the world” because the world has lost the power to “gather” people and “to relate and separate” them (HC, 52). Arendt’s largest and most ambitious goal was therefore to overcome modern world alienation and turn away from caring for the self to caring for the world.

Admittedly, Arendt’s debt to Heidegger is not without problem. Some critics, such as Thomas Pangle, Maier-Katkin and Maier-Katkin, Martin Jay, Luc Ferry, Alain Renaut and Richard Wolin, have seen this debt as a problem because Heidegger is regarded as a dominating and overpowering negative intellectual influence. For instance, seeing Arendt as a “Heideggerian fellow traveler”, Pangle criticized Arendt’s pursuit of an esoteric methodology of concealed meanings as a twisted view from underwater.⁵⁴ According to Maier-Katkin and Maier-Katkin, although “exciting and dangerous”, Heidegger’s thought places “life on the verge of the abyss” where nothingness is waiting for Arendt’s leap of faith.⁵⁵ Likewise, some view Heidegger’s influence as the main source of the decisionistic or irrationalist elements of Arendt’s account of action, such as Jay, Ferry, Renaut and Wolin.⁵⁶ Such critics have criticised Arendt’s “groundless” freedom, action and judgment, and attributed it to her acceptance of the overpowering influence of Heidegger.⁵⁷ Yet, blaming Heidegger’s influence on Arendt is suspiciously

⁵³ YAZICIOĞLU, S. 2020. Postponed Care: a Historical Critique of Care from the Existentialist Perspectives of Heidegger and Arendt. *International journal of philosophy and theology*, 81, 292-309.

⁵⁴ See “Heidegger: Arendt between Past and Future” in Arendt’s dissertation on Augustine, 1996, p. 175.

⁵⁵ MAIER-KATKIN, D. 2010a. *Stranger from Abroad: Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, Friendship, and Forgiveness*, New York, W.W. Norton.

⁵⁶ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. 145. WOLIN, R. 2001. *Heidegger’s Children: Hannah Arendt, Karl Loewith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse*, Princeton, Princeton University Press. Wolin, for instance, described Arendt as one of “Heidegger’s children”, criticizing her for ‘polis envy’, which referred to her controversial nostalgia/anti-modernism which was inherited from Heidegger.

⁵⁷ WOLIN, R. 1995. WOLIN, R. 2001; MAIER-KATKIN, D. & MAIER-KATKIN, B. 2006; MAIER-KATKIN, D. 2010; GRUNENBERG, A., BIRMINGHAM, P., LEBEDEVA, K. & VON WITZKE BIRMINGHAM, E. 2017. *Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger: History of a Love*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press. NIXON, J. 2015a. Arendt and Heidegger: The Struggle for Recognition. *Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Friendship*.

dangerous because this kind of mentality seeks excuses for and does not treat her as someone who had her own theoretical stance that was firmly rooted in her own intellectual ability and life experience. Thus, putting Arendt 'under' Heidegger is problematic. We should see her as an independent thinker, who navigates her own way of critiquing and overcoming of her teacher.

1.2 Arendt's critique of Heidegger over the concept of plurality

The intellectual and theoretical influence of Heidegger in Arendt's work is a well-established fact to the extent that Arendt's political thought was both built upon and yet departed from Heidegger's thinking.⁵⁸ It was not Arendt's primary goal to prove Heidegger wrong but, as Barash has rightly pointed out, only when Arendt's work is to be taken as a "thinly veiled, implicit critique" of Heidegger can her own originality be fully appreciated.⁵⁹ Indeed, many Arendtian scholars believe that Arendt remained critical of Heidegger's methods and ideas, which were also triply intertwined: 1) his Platonic inclination toward human affairs, 2) his failure to adequately recognize the human condition of plurality, and 3) his focus on human mortality with the notion of being-toward-death.

First, Arendt implicitly criticized Heidegger's romantic attitude toward politics, depicting him as becoming trapped in his own beautifully decorated burrow, which eventually drove him away from a commonly shared, public world and inwards

1 ed. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

⁵⁸ Taminiaux observed that Arendt both accepted and challenged key aspects of Heidegger's thought. TAMINIAUX, J. 1997. *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger*, SUNY Press. Seyla Benhabib believed that Arendt's criticisms show that Heidegger's concept of the world 'opens up' but also 'closes down' philosophical access to the phenomena of the political. BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. 51; 55. For Daniel Maier-Katkin, Heidegger's reading of Plato in the classroom which Arendt attended during 1924-1925 led to her first attempt to practise "thinking with and against Heidegger". On the one hand, Arendt admired Heidegger's effort at a deconstructive reading of traditional philosophy since Plato who began a contemplative tradition which had been thought to be in decline; on the other hand, Arendt was also well aware that Heidegger's turning away from Plato did not lead him toward the "actual existence" of human beings, but toward an "abstract metaphysics of ideas and ideals". MAIER-KATKIN, D. 2010a. *Stranger from Abroad: Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, Friendship, and Forgiveness*, New York, W.W. Norton. See Arendt's debt and critique of Heidegger, on Plato 25-29, and on method of phenomenology: 55. In a similar vein, Villa viewed Arendt as "appropriating Heidegger's existential-ontological approach" while at the same time shrugging off Heidegger's subjectivist residue in order to justify the "phenomena of freedom, action and judgment". VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. 114.

⁵⁹ BARASH, J. A. 2002. Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Remembrance. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 10, 171-182..

toward the self.⁶⁰ Centring around the self as detached from others, Heidegger's subjectivism resonates with the contemplative tradition which is accountable for the "groundless abyss" of freedom, action and judgment.⁶¹ Villa rightly observed that Arendt did not limit herself to Heidegger's notion of being-in-the-world as an existential category of Dasein which he used against the disembodied and atomistic Cartesian subject. She went further by revealing the "anti-worldly, anti-political bias of Western culture from the fall of Rome to the present".⁶² Similarly, Taminiaux saw Arendt as a fundamental critic of the contemplative tendency within Heidegger's thought. Yet, the irony is that Taminiaux read Heidegger as Plato, but somehow, Arendt's critique of Plato was Heideggerian.⁶³ In view of this, Seyla Benhabib attributes Arendt's reluctance about modernism to Heidegger who helped Arendt to open up an unprecedented possibility for philosophers to think about human affairs, and "yet also closed down philosophical access to the phenomena of the political" due to the old prejudice which philosophers hold toward the realm of human affairs.⁶⁴ Elizabeth Minnich comprehensively characterized Arendt's phenomenological thinking as 'political' because in comparison with the traditional 'philosophical' way of thinking which is introspectively turning away from or going beyond the world, Arendt conducted a thinking "in and for the world", with others, toward the public, in front of a varied audience.⁶⁵

Second, therefore, Heidegger's phenomenology does not attend to what Arendt meant by plurality – the human condition of action.⁶⁶ According to

⁶⁰ See Arendt, 'Heidegger the Fox' in *Essays in Understanding*, pp. 361-2. See, BISKOVSKI, L. 1995. Politics Versus Aesthetics: Arendt's Critiques of Nietzsche and Heidegger. *The Review of politics*, 57, 59-89. JONES, M. T. 1998. Heidegger the Fox: Hannah Arendt's Hidden Dialogue. *New German Critique*, 73, 164-192.

⁶¹ Villa took great pains in tracing Arendt's conception of freedom, action and judgment from within the traditional philosophy and the Heideggerian roots. VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ TAMINIAUX, J. 1997. *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger*, SUNY Press.

⁶⁴ BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. pp.51-56. For Benhabib, Arendt and her contemporaries had all experienced "the sheer phenomenological and descriptive power of the seemingly abstract and empty categories that initiated *Being and Time*".

⁶⁵ MINNICH, E. K. 2003. Arendt, Heidegger, Eichmann: Thinking in and for the World. *An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 86, 103-117.

⁶⁶ Plurality is the fact that human beings need each other to confirm their own existence as cross-references,

Benhabib, Arendt retained her lifelong admiration and respect for Heidegger's recognition of the human "capacity to let the phenomena shine through" on the one hand, whereas on the other, Heidegger "failed to live up to his own best insights".⁶⁷ Namely, as I see it, Heidegger failed to bring human experiences into an overall political context. That is, we do not experience our own existence solely through speculation; we always feel, hear, touch, smell and taste the world and others, as Arendt showed, within the web of human relationships. Consequently, Heidegger's incapability of articulating the "human condition of plurality", according to Benhabib, "led him to develop a conception of radically isolated selfhood".⁶⁸ Likewise, according to Richard Bernstein, there is nothing comparable with or even approximating to "what Arendt means by plurality" in Heidegger, who remained "insensitive to this vital dimension of human affairs".⁶⁹ Perhaps this is the main reason for his political impotence and his flattening of human togetherness/plurality under *das Man*.⁷⁰

Third, Arendt was also critical of Heidegger's emphasis on death as opposed to birth and beginning. Samnotra characterized Heidegger's notion of death (the finitude of Dasein) as loneliness and singularity as "provincial", whereas Arendt's concept of plurality was an attempt to build a web of global human relationships.⁷¹ In this regard, one of the most characteristic aspects of being human, according to Arendt, is that we are not "thrown", but "born" into the world.⁷² So according to

otherwise, our existence would fall into an abyss of appearances, phenomena and ever-recurring and ever-changing meaninglessness, in other words, worldlessness.

⁶⁷ BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. 52-53; 102.

⁶⁸ See Benhabib, *ibid.* This is so because Heidegger is "from the standpoint of which an equally radical dissolution in a 'whole,' in a mass political movement, would appear plausible." 104-5.

⁶⁹ BERNSTEIN, R. J. 1997. Provocation and Appropriation: Hannah Arendt's Response to Martin Heidegger. *Constellations* (Oxford, England), 4, 153-171. For example, viewing Arendt's political thought as "trenchant critical response to Heidegger" by 'provocation' and 'appropriation,' Bernstein underlined the "human condition of plurality" in Arendt's theory of action, which Heidegger could not comprehend. Bernstein refused to acknowledge Arendt's discipleship to Heidegger; in contrast, he regarded Arendt as Heidegger's "most acute and thoughtful critic", applying "Heideggerian tropes and vocabulary" to "think *against* Heidegger". 159.

⁷⁰ Trying to come to terms with Arendt's recognition and admiration for Heidegger as the "transcendental philosophical genius of the time" in *Martin Heidegger at Eighty*, with Heidegger's political stupidity or impotence during his short involvement with the Nazis in 1933-1934, Margaret Canovan unpacked Arendt's reflection on the relation between philosophy and politics, or more broadly, between thought and action. CANOVAN, M. 1990. Socrates or Heidegger? Hannah Arendt's Reflections on Philosophy and Politics. *Social Research*, 135-165.

⁷¹ SAMNOTRA, M. 2016. Provincialising Heidegger; Globalising Arendt. *Contexto internacional*, 38, 909-925.

⁷² I thank Gareth Williams and James Muldoon for their advice and reference on the German version of *The*

Grunenberg, Arendt invoked natality as a “coequal condition of existence”.⁷³ Indeed, her concept of natality is widely understood as her rebuke to Heidegger’s solipsistic emphasis on death, to which his attempt to understand the meaning of existence was anchored. Inspiringly, Benhabib distinguished between death as an “existential event” and as a “social fact”. As an existential event, death confirms that everybody exists alone, which constitutes the fundamental ontology of Dasein as being-toward-death in Heidegger’s philosophy. As a social fact, death involves many more than the individual as a lonely thinker since someone’s death must be “mourned, remembered, lamented, or rejoiced over; met with sorrow or with glee ...”.⁷⁴ In Arendt’s eyes, Heidegger’s notion of death is an isolated event; his depiction of the individual “representative of no one but himself” and the individual’s concern “of nothing but his own nothingness” (EU, 181).⁷⁵

In summary, Arendt’s criticism of Heidegger is manifested, above all, in her concept of plurality, which was celebrated by her major interpreter Margaret Canovan as a political thinker’s augmentation of our world.⁷⁶ Human plurality is a hermeneutic facticity which is reflective and thereby analytic, dialogic and existential.⁷⁷ Heidegger was basically indifferent to and incapable of dealing with the real world as a place of human togetherness and plurality. In contrast, Arendt used the concept of plurality to bring new light to the modern awareness of the significance of human affairs as the subject of politics, which is characterized as the spontaneity and contingency of human action and natality (action and

Human Condition Vita Activa: “Da Menschen nicht von ungefähr in die Welt geworfen werden, sondern von Menschen in eine schon bestehende Menschenwelt geboren werden, geht das Bezugsgewebe menschlicher Angelegenheiten allem einzelnen Handeln und Sprechen voraus... .” (quoting in another language without providing a translation is pretentious and presumptuous.)p. 226, cf Arendt, HC183f; also *Denktagebuch* 549. ARENDT, H. 2001. *Vita Activa oder Vom tätigen Leben*, München; Zürich, Piper.

⁷³ GRUNENBERG, A. & DAUB, A. 2007. Arendt, Heidegger, Jaspers: Thinking Through the Breach in Tradition. *Social Research*, 74, 1003-1028.

⁷⁴ BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications., 106. Likewise, Benhabib borrowed Thomas Rentsch’s description of Heidegger’s philosophy as “a godless theology” and related Rentsch’s insight to Heidegger’s “methodological solipsism”.

⁷⁵ Heidegger’s presence in Arendt’s thought has drawn a critical perspective in “What is Existenz Philosophy?” see Arendt, *Essays in Understanding*.

⁷⁶ CANOVAN, M. 1994. *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press.280-281.

⁷⁷ This has been widely discussed by scholars such as Benhabib, Villa and Taminioux.

freedom) within the public realm.

1.3 Arendt's overcoming of Heidegger with the question of nobodyness and Roman antiquity

In the light of the scholarly debates on Arendt's indebtedness to and criticism of Heidegger, we can further recognize how Arendt sought to overcome Heidegger by 1) appealing to Roman antiquity, and 2) substituting the existential question of why there is 'nothing' with why there is 'nobody'. In so doing, I shall show the subtlety of Arendt's intellectual relation with Heidegger by differentiating their political and ontological claims.

First, in addition to the substantial political claims through which Arendt distanced herself from Heidegger, she also turned to the Roman tradition of political thought which Heidegger had dismissed. Barbara Cassin highlighted how Heidegger viewed the Roman origin of the Western tradition as being derived from the originality of the Greeks, whereas Arendt viewed the Romans as the most political of people.⁷⁸ In Heidegger's view, the rootlessness of Western thought originated from the Roman translation from the Greeks. Since then, the original, profound and rich Greek experiences were established, standardized and thereby stabilized during this 'take over' *translation* (OWR, 149).⁷⁹ Heidegger attributed the metaphysical tradition to this Roman translation in the way that the concept of humanism is of a Roman/Latin and therefore metaphysical origin. For the later Heidegger, because of this Roman translation, metaphysics not only failed to ask the question of (human) being, but more fundamentally, "the question is inaccessible to metaphysics as such" (LH, 227).

In contrast, for Arendt, the Roman space of appearance extended far beyond

⁷⁸ CASSIN, B. 1990. Greeks and Romans: Paradigms of the Past in Arendt and Heidegger. *Comparative Civilizations Review*, 28-53. CASSIN, B. 2016a. Arendt: To Have One's Language for a Homeland. *Nostalgia: When Are we Ever at Home?* : Fordham University. She also said that "When Heidegger invokes Latin it is usually to show how the translation of Greek terms betrays the Greek experience of *aletheia*. *Veritas* bolts the door on *aletheia*, and Heidegger's intellectual journey takes him 'upstream' from the Latin to the Greeks".

⁷⁹ "Roman thought takes over the Greek words without a corresponding, equally original experience of what they say, without the Greek word. The rootlessness of Western thought begins with this translation." (OWR, 149)

the boundaries of the *polis* of Athens.⁸⁰ Recent scholarship has highlighted the significance of the Roman *res publica* as an alternative to the Greek *polis* as a paradigm in Arendt's political thinking.⁸¹ To demonstrate that, Roy Tsao argued that Arendt's real intention in *The Human Condition* was to criticize the Greek solution to the boundlessness and unpredictability of political action.⁸² Tsao challenged the popular interpretation of Arendt's approach to the *polis* not as "a regrettable lapse into an unrealistic and irresponsible nostalgia ...", but rather that she "deliberately" and "systematically" placed Greece in contradiction to "her own theoretical claims".⁸³ Similarly, for Taminiaux, the alleged Graecomania does not hold under examination because, compared with the insufficiency of the Greek experience of action, the Romans had wider experience of political action.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, we must pay attention to the idiosyncratic character of how Arendt, rather independently, turned away from Heidegger's philhellenic tendency and towards Roman antiquity. In other words, as I shall argue, Arendt extended the Heideggerian approach to look to the Roman experience of being human as transcending the finitude in time through acting, loving (*amor mundi*) and augmenting (*auctoritas*).

Second, Arendt sought to overcome Heidegger by transforming his *Seinsfrage* of 'things' ("Why is there something instead of nothing?") into a question of human affairs: "Why is there somebody rather than nobody?" For

⁸⁰ On Arendt's debt to the Romans more generally, see Dean Hammer, Hannah Arendt and Roman Political Thought: The Practice of Theory, *Political Theory* 30/1 (2002), 124-49.

⁸¹ It became a trend among scholars who believe Arendt's later meditations on the Roman *res publica*, especially her emphasis on the unrepeatable founding of the Rome, as the extension "both spatially and temporally" of her idea on the relation between the *polis* and its citizens. See for instance, TSAO, R. 2002. Arendt against Athens: Rereading *The Human Condition*. *Political Theory*, 30, 97-123. CASSIN, B. 2005. Time of Deliberation and Space of Power: Athens and Rome, The First Conflict. *Javnost - The Public*, 12, 39-44. TAMINIAUX, J. 2006. Athens and Rome. The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt. ASHCROFT, C. 2018. The Polis and the Res Publica: Two Arendtian Models of Violence. *History of European Ideas*, 44, 128-142.

⁸² Through an intensive reading of the *Human Condition*, Tsao found that the claims made in Chapters 2 and 5 are fundamentally different and that in Chapter 5, Arendt did not endorse the politics of the ancient Greek city-state as is commonly agreed, especially political freedom achieved at the cost of the freedom of the majority within the household, as women and slaves were depicted in Aristotle's *Politics*, contrary to Arendtian researchers' belief of her nostalgic admiration of the antiquity of the 'lost treasure' – the public realm of the city-state. TSAO, R. 2002. Arendt against Athens: Rereading *The Human Condition*. *Political Theory*, 30, 97-123.

⁸³ *Ibid.* p. 98.

⁸⁴ TAMINIAUX, J. 2006. Athens and Rome. The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt. The Athens *polis* was not set up as a political paradigm in Arendt's political thought, as many scholars believe.

Arendt, what mattered primarily was human beings who are capable of “building, preserving, and caring for a world that can survive us and remain a fit to live in for those who come after us” (BPF, 95). Seen from this political claim as an empirical basis, human beings do not begin “from nowhere” and end up “into nothing”.

I believe, however, that Arendt not only employed the implication and structure of Heidegger’s questioning, but also borrowed the logicity of Heidegger’s problematic questioning of nothingness. From my perspective, the question of nothingness is a logical basis for making apparent the obtrusiveness which barely announces itself in the phenomenal world. In other words, Heidegger’s *Seinsfrage* attempts to address something which is inarticulable yet important, something involving our borderline experiences since, for Heidegger, there are ‘things’ that are beyond our conceptual grasp and therefore our cognitive rendering. In moments such as this, phenomenology is introduced as a methodology to solve this problem. In the lecture course in the summer of 1926, Heidegger explicitly demonstrated two features of transcendence, as well as Being: “Being in general lies beyond. This lying beyond of Being and of the determinations of the Being of beings, over and above beings as such, is *transcendere* – ‘to surpass’, transcend”. This ‘lying beyond’ first and foremost he characterized as ‘inaccessible’ as *transcendens*. Thus the task of a philosopher is, as Heidegger interpreted Plato’s definition, “constantly devoted to casting his gaze on beings”.⁸⁵

Even so, Heidegger set his phenomenological gaze free, in the mode of an ever-renewing hermeneutic “conceptual interpretation”, from the Platonic gaze, which views concepts as absolute and fixed. Heidegger used the term ‘fundamental ontology’ to distinguish himself from ‘traditional ontology’ in order to conduct a more radical conceptualization of concepts which are consciously

⁸⁵ See, HEIDEGGER, M. 2008. *Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy*, trans. ROJCEWICZ, R. Bloomington, Indiana University Press. HEIDEGGER, M. 2004. *Die Grundbegriffe der Antiken Philosophie*, Frankfurt am Main, V. Klostermann.

rooted within traditional metaphysics and its categories (BT, 34). That is to say, fundamental ontology recognizes the finitude of human understanding that particular parts of the given world in which we are situated remain “shadowed by dimensions of it that escape” our grasp.⁸⁶

In short, Arendt methodologically or strategically overcame Heidegger with political claims such as human plurality, the reality of human existence and the world, and the political existence of Roman antiquity. Building on my reading of Arendt as a Heideggerian thinker and Heidegger as an anti-traditional thinker, I therefore gain an overall perspective which leads me towards an ineffable realm of being human which I call ‘transcendence’. I use ‘ineffability’ to describe the obtrusiveness, cognitively and linguistically, which makes us realize our finite existence, which makes us wonder and think. That is, the ineffability brings back the finitude of human existence which can be felt only when we are confronted with two boundaries: cognitive and linguistic.

1.4 The human capacity for transcendence

As discussed above, Arendt’s indebtedness to, criticism of and overcoming of Heidegger are widely acknowledged in the literature. However, what is often overlooked is her preoccupation with transcendence which she, knowingly or unknowingly, shared with Heidegger. As I shall discuss in detail in Chapter 3, Arendt’s discussion of ‘who’ helps us to recognize how she redeployed the Heideggerian notion of transcendence within her political thought. Importantly, who somebody is transcends their own deeds and words. Compared with Heidegger’s notion of transcendence as authentic self-revelation of the ‘who’ which reveals his or her own being, Kristeva recognized that Arendt ‘sets up’ “a transcendence in action and word with others”, given the hiddenness of ‘who’ to one’s self, but revealed to others because ‘who’ is a self which is hidden but nevertheless visible to others.⁸⁷ ‘Who’ transcends but remains the source of

⁸⁶ NENADIC, N. 2013. Heidegger, Arendt, and Eichmann in Jerusalem. *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*, 5, 36-48..

⁸⁷ KRISTEVA, J. 2001. *Hannah Arendt: Life is a Narrative*, trans. COLLINS, F., University of Toronto Press.

deeds and words.

The reason why the notion of transcendence is overlooked is primarily because there is a recognition of her criticism of the two-world theory within metaphysics, which she took, by following Heidegger, as her task to dismantle (Chapter 2). Only a handful of scholars, such as Villa and Taminiaux, have emphasized this dimension within their discussion of Arendt's and Heidegger's theoretical relationship. Both Villa and Taminiaux rightly rendered the notion of transcendence as a potentiality or capacity of human beings.⁸⁸

Taminiaux's instinct was correct when he posited the notion of transcendence under the phenomenological gaze, viewing the human as a transcending being.⁸⁹ Taminiaux distinguished between two forms of inquiry: "Who is Dasein?" which Heidegger pursued in *Being and Time* and "Who are we?" which Arendt asked in *The Human Condition*.⁹⁰ According to Taminiaux, Heidegger's fundamental ontology and its problem of the *Seinsfrage* were guided by Husserl's phenomenology, which privileges intuition. The Husserlian intuitive register highlights a "non-obvious relationship ... between a given indicator and a something indicated that is not given" but can only be indicated, announced and hinted at. The idea of intuition in Husserl plays a key role in Heidegger's fundamental ontology: the "existential analytic conceived as ontology of Dasein". Taminiaux believed that Heidegger conducted a movement ontologizing his three Husserlian (re)discoveries: intentionality, categorical intuition and the *a priori*, which he described as "a movement conducted toward transcendence".⁹¹

Taminiaux's understanding of transcendence seems to me like the terminal

pp. 56-8.

⁸⁸ See Villa, p. 126. "... transcendence of Dasein's 'Being-possible'..." and Taminiaux, p. 74. "... the transcendental ego is the ultimate condition of possibility".

⁸⁹ Yet Taminiaux's interpretation of the Arendt/Heidegger relationship within the opposition between politics and philosophy tends to overlook the transcendental dimension in Arendt's political philosophy. Taminiaux could have gone further through exploring the transcendental dimension of human in Arendt's political appropriation of Heidegger's existential-ontological claim.

⁹⁰ Two modes of inquiry already presuppose a distinction between a philosophical answer characterized as speculative and singular, and that of a political answer which is contingent and plural.

⁹¹ Taminiaux, p. 63

point of the movement of intentionality (as the vanishing point in the pictorial sense) of “intuitive vigilance” imposed by Husserl. For in “the name of this vigilance”, according to Taminiaux, the “phenomenological gaze” proposed by Heidegger does not move “toward the transcendental life of consciousness” but rather “toward the openness of Dasein to beings and to itself as well as toward the understanding of Being inherent in this openness, in short toward transcendence”.⁹² The key here is to see transcendence as “the understanding of Being of beings by the human entity”.⁹³ What Heidegger meant by the notion of transcendence seemed to Taminiaux to be one of Heidegger’s “densest presentations”. Taminiaux admitted that “Heidegger should say that Dasein is in itself *überschüssig*, excessive. *Überschüß*, surplus, is the term used ... to qualify the status of categorical intuition with respect to sensitive intuition”. Crucial here is Taminiaux’s contention that the presupposition of *a priori* in our understanding of time justified Heidegger’s debt to Husserl “when it came to making temporality the principle of transcendence as understanding of Being”.⁹⁴

Villa supplemented Taminiaux’s perspective by turning to Heidegger’s sources. Villa addressed the transcendence of Arendt’s original claim that human action has “existential supremacy” over all other activities. But human action only transcends upon or toward world in the sense that as a phenomenological horizon, ‘world’ accentuates the primacy of appearances, as well as the urge toward self-display, for all living beings, common to human and animal. Villa believed that Heidegger’s influence on Arendt can be understood at two levels, based on Heidegger’s two distinctions: concealment and unconcealment, everydayness and transcendence. The distinction between concealment and unconcealment had an impact on her notion of the “brightness” of the public realm contrasted with the “darkness” of the private space. So for Villa, Arendt owed her central distinction of the private/public sphere to Heidegger’s ontological treatment of truth as *aleithia*, of (un)concealment. The distinction between

⁹² *ibid.*

⁹³ *ibid.*, 64.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 64-5.

everydayness and transcendence was emphasized more by Villa who often interchangeably used “the dialectic relation between transcendence and everydayness” (or fallenness) – a distinction which Villa identified with the distinction between *Eigenlichkeit* and *Uneigenlichkeit*.⁹⁵ A tendency – the darkness of the household, the *homo faber*’s category of means/end – “that undermines the possibility of genuine politics” ... “flows from her acceptance of the Heideggerian polarity of transcendence and fallenness”.⁹⁶ Like Heidegger, according to Villa, Arendt’s understanding of the distinctive human capacity for transcendence shows itself as authentic disclosiveness, which could be potentially “undermined by a tendency to prefer the ‘necessity’ or ‘tranquility’ of everyday life to the contingency of freedom”.⁹⁷ Villa acknowledged that the human capacity for transcendence lies within Arendt’s acceptance of Heidegger, but his understanding of transcendence does not sufficiently recognize the mechanics and rationale underneath the capacity for transcendence – the cognitive and linguistic oblivion built into Western philosophical tradition.

Here, Villa saw Heidegger as an input in Arendt’s theory of action, as I quote: “For Heidegger, ‘knowing the world’ is a derivative relation: existence (that is Being-in-the-world), not cognition, constitutes man’s existential being” because world is “not originally ‘beheld’, but is dwelled in”.⁹⁸ Because of this unconscious dwelling, the world fades from our horizon (I shall discuss this in Chapter 3). It seems that too much beholding (contemplating) underlies the modern prejudice towards action. Villa also visualized Heidegger’s notion of ‘fallenness’ and ‘thrownness’ in a rather hierarchical structure in which transcendence as lifted above and everydayness as fallen below. This transcendence/everydayness distinction still clings to the metaphysical structure which both Heidegger and

⁹⁵ See Villa, VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. In Chapter 5, and 145. ‘A second, more profound level of influence is revealed when we turn to her transposition of Heideggerian dynamics of transcendence and everydayness from an existential to a political context’ p. 114.

⁹⁶ Villa, 115.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*

⁹⁸ I believe that Villa was confined by his own prejudice toward political theory, within which he thought that cognition is derivative, and it must give way to action as a mode of political existence. p. 121.

Arendt regarded as a “structural fallacy” (see Chapter 2).

Villa provided a good account of Arendt’s understanding of transcendence. The world was characterized by Villa as a “kind of historicotranscendental condition for the possibility of meaning”.⁹⁹ As I see it, this rather dense feature of the world – historicotranscendental – captures the gist of what Arendt meant by human and world: world is constitutive – like a built-in ‘character’ – of human, but human is not necessarily the character of the world even if we build it and dwell in it; the world can fade away from us and we can lose it because, fundamentally, humans are mortal beings who are nevertheless capable of thinking about eternity. Human beings must therefore be historical and transcendental at the same time. In this regard, Villa was right when he discussed the idea of world by using Heidegger’s metaphor of the hammer, indicating that a particular ‘disturbance’ is necessary for the world to announce itself.¹⁰⁰ Otherwise, the “horizon phenomenon of world ... gets passed over in our everyday absorption in our activities.”¹⁰¹ From a higher mode, according to Villa, Heidegger characterized this tendency as declining or fallen; an “inauthentic way of grasping ourselves and the world”. The authentic way, however, is our capacity for transcendence as being-in-the-world as “Dasein’s care for its own Being”.¹⁰² This is perhaps Villa’s most important interpretation of transcendence as it captures the significant nuances of transcendence as the human capacity to ‘be’ in the world.¹⁰³

It should be noted that owning by grasping is achieved through violent disclosing, occupying and grabbing before carefully experiencing and understanding, rather than a peaceful unfolding. Only through such violent

⁹⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Villa, 121-2.

¹⁰¹ Villa, 122. Villa was also right that ‘shallowness’ can be identified in the “vocabulary and prejudices of political theory” when he distanced himself from antifoundationalism. p.117. And this can be true as a critique of Villa holding prejudice by reducing philosophy into its contemplative tradition.

¹⁰² Villa, 131.

¹⁰³ However, the human capacity as ‘authentically disclosive’ being-in-the-world expressively underlines Villa’s strong tendency of the agonistic spirit in his understanding of public world, which is consistent with his hereditary prejudice.

disclosure (a process referred to as “making one’s own” by Heidegger) does Dasein realize its transcendence or its capacity for uncovering or its Being as ‘disclosedness’.¹⁰⁴ The distinction between authentic and inauthentic disclosedness therefore provides us with a hierarchical relation between the reified (everyday) disclosedness and an unreified form which (potentially) prevents the ‘clearing’ from ‘dimming down’; one which illuminates through its ability to uncover the new through its creative or original spontaneity. This configuration of genuine disclosedness and inauthentic understanding reformulates the relation between transcendence and everydayness.

In summary, both Taminiaux and Villa saw Arendt’s phenomenological concept of transcendence from a Husserlian or Heideggerian perspective. However, transcendence was not their central concern, as it is mine.¹⁰⁵ Yet, in building on their work together with scholars who emphasize the Roman aspects of Arendt’s political thought, I shall show how Arendt remained preoccupied with the question of transcendence. This will not only also offer readers an opportunity to re-consider Arendt’s theoretical relation to Heidegger but will enable an original interpretation of some key concepts in Arendt’s political thought. In particular, I shall highlight the distinctive human capacity for transcendence that politics can articulate, provide and guarantee. The problem which we are facing, however, is that whenever we attempt to present Arendt’s conception of the human, we often encounter moments which resist articulation within our language: these moments seem to block any access to a comprehensive understanding without falling back on a traditional metaphysical understanding of transcending which relies on the kind of two-world theory which Arendt sought to overcome.

Conclusion

As I shall demonstrate in the next chapter, Arendt developed a critique of

¹⁰⁴ Villa, 132.

¹⁰⁵ Although Villa was eager to substantiate, in the ontological sense, Arendt’s political theory of action, freedom and judgment, particularly in the post-metaphysical modern world that the once firm ground is shattered and uprooted into an abyss, he then missed the chance to give a methodological account of the notion of transcendence through the lens of Heidegger.

metaphysics by developing Heidegger's own thoughts, which she amended and extended sympathetically by turning to the Roman political thinking and experiences in order to elaborate on what Heidegger had shown about the human capacity to transcend. This transcendental dimension of human existence is indicated through what remains ineffable since it concerns making present what cannot be articulated. The importance of this making apparent what remains ineffable is that, actually, the ineffable is the ground of what makes us human.

In the next two chapters, I shall address in more detail the questions of how human beings transcend their own existence and what exactly it is they are transcending. Transcending is a way of worlding, which is constituted with three phases: naming, building and caring. What exactly human beings are transcending is their own finite existence, or what Heidegger called the "hermeneutic facticity", which means both being mortal and being cognitively limited. Being mortal is the human condition of life and being cognitively limited is a consequence of metaphysics and its two-world theory. I shall therefore describe the human capacity for transcendence as 'worlding', which transcends the finitude of existence in its double sense of being mortal and being cognitively limited. The verb 'to transcend' refers the human capacity to carry over man's own mortality and cognitive limitations, which have been long deemed as insurmountable within traditional ontology and theology.

2 Naming the Ineffable: The Transcendental Ground of the Human

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how Arendt helps us recognize the modern loss of the immanent human capacity for transcendence, as carrying across the supersensible and sensible realm, with the experience of ineffability.

Significantly, Arendt understands the ineffability of human experience as something which refuses “to be pinned down and handed over to others”, such as “things close at hand” or “the sun and the moon and the stars and the genesis of all things”. In other words, the ineffable “refuses to lend itself to a transformation” and therefore appears in the world (LM, I: 114). The ineffable is mainly used in its plain meaning: something which cannot be expressed or described in language.¹⁰⁶

From within textual evidence of Arendt’s own writing, I reconstruct and demonstrate two aspects of the human capacity for transcendence: first, the ability to *experience* the ineffable with some degree of openness and questionableness; and second, the ability to *name* the ineffable by handing over (metaphorizing) the supersensible (as ineffable) into the sensible (the perceptible, tangible or visible). I therefore argue that human being is meta being insofar as being human consists in naming the ineffable.¹⁰⁷

Viewing the human capacity for transcendence as a mode of unconcealing the hiddenness of the world is therefore only half right. The other half is to demonstrate what exactly is hidden from us and how such hiddenness remains

¹⁰⁶ According to Oxford English Dictionary, ‘ineffable’ also means, “too great for words; transcending expression; unspeakable, unutterable, inexpressible”.

¹⁰⁷ The guiding argument is that we are yet to fully appreciate the transcendental dimension of human being in Arendt’s political thought. This is not to say that we need a degree of transcendence to justify and legitimize human acts, nor to lend meaning to human existence at all. Although I use the term ‘transcendental’ throughout the thesis, I recognize that there are multiple ways of interpreting ‘transcendence’ and ‘transcending’ in Arendtian political theory. In particular, I examine Arendt’s conception of transcendence by considering it in relation to the ‘ineffable’.

hidden – what exactly do we transcend. To understand this, we need go back to the very basic – the *being* of human as appearing in unconcealing (or disclosing) is itself a creation of human knowledge – in the form of cognition and language.¹⁰⁸ Here, I designate human experience as a mode of cognition. This is very important in phenomenological study because our feelings or experiences can be kept hidden from us only because we have no way to articulate them. In other words, our experience remains alien, strange and hidden because of the inarticulability. We have no equivalent knowledge or linguistic tool provided for us to make sense of unprecedented phenomena and our experiences. Heidegger's phenomenological interpretation of transcendence benefits from his on-going project of metaphysics which helps us break free from philosophers' condescending position.

Building upon yet distancing from Heidegger, Arendt developed her own understanding of transcendence against her overall perspective – her notion of plurality in that we share the world with other people; then Arendt took this dimension of transcendence and showed why it is so important for politics.

I shall therefore demonstrate that a re-examination of Arendt's account of the human is not only necessary but also achievable. Even so, we need to recognize the complex conceptual (2.1), metaphysical (2.2) and existential (2.3) difficulties – the methodological and theoretical sources which comprise Arendt's conception of the human. Methodologically, I shall attempt to distinguish this view from that of traditional metaphysics, ontology and theology, which take transcendence as some 'external' absoluteness or otherworldliness which is forced upon the human world. Rather, I take a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to the notion of transcendence, which is understood as sheer human existence – identifiable only in rare moments of borderline experiences such as

¹⁰⁸ I suspect that this is because Villa believed that cognition is derivative in Heidegger's thought, that existence precedes cognition. Therefore Villa ignored the importance of thinking and philosophy, which Arendt herself, in her later life, took on as a correction or supplement of *vita activa*: such as her analysis of the inter-relation between the banality of evil, thinking activity and morality, or her whole-hearted devotion post-humus book – *The Life of the Mind* – the *vita activa*.

speechless joy or pain, which is ineffable. Thus, as a parallel thread, I shall also trace Arendt's theoretical sources back to Heidegger's teaching regarding metaphysics and hermeneutic phenomenology.

In the first section of this chapter, I shall address the conceptual challenge to an understanding of Arendt's concept of the human. As an alternative, I shall examine an existential question which Arendt posed: "Why is there anybody rather than nobody?" By exploring this question, I shall establish a narrative of the existential anxiety of the modern human being. The purpose is twofold: 1) to work out a positive understanding of the question of nobodyness; and 2) to shed a new light onto the existential approach toward the question of the human: the ineffable.

In the second section, I shall investigate the metaphysical difficulty of understanding Arendt's conception of the human. Arendt diagnosed the structural deflection of traditional metaphysics and its two-world theory which leaves us at a loss in terms of how to describe the ineffability of experiences through our senses. Yet roughly speaking, Arendt's attitude towards the metaphysical was dialectic: critique and defence. To discern this nuanced subtlety, I turn to Heidegger's project of metaphysics and identify the problem which haunted Plato and Aristotle: the "questionable and open nature" of being human.¹⁰⁹ And the modern metaphysics of objectivity denies our entrance into the essence of metaphysics as openness and questionableness. Lacking access, even the most obviously inexplicable is automatically categorized into something we called 'mystery,' which confronts us exactly by its ineffability (LH, 222-3).

In the third section, by emphasizing the existential difficulty of the question of the human, I shall demonstrate how hermeneutic phenomenology addresses the problem which is still haunting metaphysics.¹¹⁰ I shall take two steps in this

¹⁰⁹ HEIDEGGER, M. 1997. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. TAFT, R., Indiana University Press, p. 5.

¹¹⁰ In particular, Heidegger uses hermeneutic phenomenology as a tool in order to challenge the traditional ontology, primarily, the meaning of 'on' qua being.

section. First, I shall introduce how Husserl and Heidegger, teacher and student, examined phenomenological investigation as a method of accessing (human) being as transcendence. Second, I shall investigate how Heidegger understands the transcendental horizon of eventful hermeneutics. Given the incapability of traditional metaphysics within the supersensible world, Heidegger offers an alternative new interpretation of the transcendence of human existence which is demonstrable through hermeneutic phenomenology.

In the final section, I shall provide textual evidence to show Arendt's unrelenting interest in the notion of transcendence, especially in *The Life of the Mind* and *Denktagebuch*, and characterize the transcending human being with presentability, non-instrumentality and, most relevantly, accessibility. Then, I shall show her distinctive interpretation of *metaphor* – in Greek as 'handing over' – to illustrate how human existence is capable of experiencing and naming the ineffable by 'carrying over' the bridge between the sensible and the supersensible.

2.1 The ineffable: the existential anxiety as nobodyness

I establish the question of the human by contextualizing the question of nobodyness – particularly as a conceptual challenge – to demonstrate Arendt's account of the existential anxiety in the modern world.

In the Epilogue of *The Promise of Politics*, Arendt urged her readers to reconsider the authentic anxiety about existence in modern world, which she metaphorized as a desert. The chilling anti-nihilistic question is: '*Why is there anybody at all and not rather nobody?*' (p. 204).¹¹¹

To interpret the question of nobodyness, Arendt's trustee, editor and major interpreter Jerome Kohn believed that 'humankind'. not as a species but as "plurality of unique beginnings", is the ontological grounding of miraculous action. "The promise inherent in human plurality," he said, "provides perhaps the only

¹¹¹ Arendt used the metaphor of the desert to indicate the modern worldlessness which I further elaborate in section 3.2.

answer to Arendt's chilling question ..." (p. xxxii). Kohn's wish to offer an equivalent existential ontological response to Arendt's anti-nihilistic existential wonder of no-bodyness in the contemporary world is persuasive. He rightly captured Arendt's concern for the modern loss of human as a species with regard to an existential ground. Indeed, many people have pointed this out and made the case that plurality is the ontological grounding of the human for Arendt. However, the complex conceptual challenge of understanding the human persists.

Primarily because the human is undefinable, it has been recognized that Arendt rejected the notion of human nature and instead sought to understand human being in terms of the human condition. Furthermore, she was reluctant to speculate on the meaning of 'human nature' when in fact she was highly suspicious about whether we can "know, determine, and define" it. It feels "like jumping over our own shadows" (HC, 10). Rather elusively, in *The Promise of Politics*, Arendt confronts us with an opening line – "God created *man*, but *men* are a *human*, earthly product, the product of human nature". Or "Instead of engendering a *human being*, we try to create a *man* in our own likeness" (p. 93). In *Between Past and Future*, she wrote that "... the assumption that what makes *men human* is the urge to see" (BPF, 114). Despite these scattered remarks, Arendt was clear in herself at making distinctions: *man* is a 'creation', either by god or himself, highly unnatural or artificial, whereas *men* are a naturally *human* product.¹¹² For Arendt, a human is an earthly product of human nature; like a potato is an earthly product of potato nature. But this remains confusing: it does not explain what the human actually is. The question of human therefore poses an unanswerable conundrum, unless we are appealing to the ineffable, undefinable, untraceable realm of god.

¹¹² The Latin word *persona* means a special mask used in theatre performances to amplify an actor's voice; literally it derives from *per* ('through') and *sonum* ('sound') a device through which sound was projected. So it was technically a device for creating an illusion, a pretence, not a real thing. The word 'people', however, derives from a real thing – the Latin *populus*, which does mean 'the people'. The most confusing distinction is that between *man* and *human* because they are often used interchangeably, but Arendt clearly set her own boundary. Her interpretations of human or human being represent the bottom line or the last line of defense of being human, such as her use of 'human nature, 'human animal' and human rights'.

On this conceptual level, the question of the human keeps its essential opaqueness. As Peg Birmingham (2006) noticed, whenever we try to stabilize a unified and complete ‘nature’ of human being, or whenever we try to capture its meanings, we come to a dead-end of “contradiction or heterogeneity.”¹¹³ Confronted with the ungraspable nature of defining human existence, Marie Luise Knott (2014) offered “an escape route”: rethinking those familiar concepts in the midst of struggle, tensions, ambivalence and dilemmas and making them unknown again.¹¹⁴ Arendt’s favourite quotation from Montesquieu was:

Man, this flexible being who submits himself in society to the thoughts and impressions of his fellowmen, is equally capable of knowing his own nature when it is shown to him and of losing it the point where he has no realization that he is robbed of it. (EU 408)

In such a case, we are bumping into the ineffableness of existential anxiety in terms of the definition and clarification of the question of human. Both Birmingham and Knott showed us the importance of re-thinking what we take for granted so that we do not lose our awareness of the ‘familiar’.

Hence, alarmingly, as suggested in the Introduction of this thesis, a political approach appropriate to the question of the human becomes a pressing issue. Stuart Murray (2016) rightly pointed out that since human being is ‘distinguished’ just because its own being is in question, and the question “falters on the ambivalence of its genitive”, thus the ontology of the human is doomed because the modern human no longer lives questioningly.¹¹⁵ George Kateb (2007) on the other hand tried to pin down the dominant existential values such as human dignity, which are comprised of human status and human stature, to lend meaning

¹¹³ BIRMINGHAM, P. 2006. *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights: The Predicament of Common Responsibility*, Indiana University Press. p. 127.

¹¹⁴ KNOTT, M. L. 2014. *Unlearning With Hannah Arendt*, trans. DOLLENMAYER, D., Granta Publications.

¹¹⁵ MURRAY, S. J. 2016. Affirming the Human? The Question of Biopolitics. *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, 12, 485–495. See pp. 485-486, “To whom does this question belong? Is it a question that belongs to one who is unquestionably human, a question that only the human can pose, a human question? Or, is it a question that problematizes this very belonging, a question posed or imposed from some other *topos*?”

to human existence at all.¹¹⁶

The question is, since when has wanting an existential grounding become a political task? Villa believed that Arendt was lamenting the groundlessness of action and judgment in the post-metaphysical world. The human capacity for transcendence, as “authentic disclosive pursuits” and a form of freedom, resists the gravitational tendency of everyday life out of necessity and tranquility.¹¹⁷ Indeed, the “dialectic relation between transcendental and everydayness” – the elevated transcendence and the fallenness of everyday life – constitutes the dynamic structure of human existence. Yet Villa’s understanding of transcendence remains the essentialists’ ground or absoluteness of ontological tradition.¹¹⁸

From my perspective, instead of asking *how* the question is asked, we need look at *why* Arendt formulated the question as it is: “Why is there anybody rather than nobody?”

Contextually, Arendt distanced herself from Heidegger, for whom the question of nothingness is otherworldly. Provided that, as Arendt argued, it is the “Christian *other* worldliness” that triggers the question of Leibniz, Schelling and Heidegger: “*Why is there anything at all and not rather nothing?*” The reason why Heidegger keeps asking the question of nothingness is because nothingness has been banished since the very beginning of metaphysics. Nothingness is cognitively impossible: unknowable and incomprehensible. Whereas out of the “specific conditions of our contemporary world”, as it were, Arendt then asked the question of no-bodyness. Obviously, Arendt was following the formula of the question of ‘nothingness’. But curiously, she stopped there, without further explanation, leaving her readers much perplexed. It is as if being a guest, Arendt announces

¹¹⁶ KATEB, G. 2007. Existential values in Arendt’s treatment of evil and morality. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 74(3), , 811-854.

¹¹⁷ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. p. 115.

¹¹⁸ That is, Villa polarizes the transcendence and fallenness in the very traditional philosophical model of up-down or ascending-descending structure to contrast Arendt’s admitted struggle between politics and philosophy.

herself by appearing at the door but refuses to step in. What is at stake here, I believe, is the way in which we look at these limiting boundary concepts.

Elsewhere, in *The Life of the Mind*, Arendt seems rather annoyed by terms such as nothingness, nobody, nowhere, void and absolute. These terms are used in the realm of mental activities as “limiting boundary concepts”, which enclose our thinking within “insurmountable walls”, and tell us nothing but our finite being. Those walls constitute the interfacial-layered structure of time and space within which thinking is taking place. By quoting Heidegger, Arendt understood that the metaphysical question of nothingness is always “swinging back” and circling around.¹¹⁹ Circling back and forth, an empty and meaningless void confronts us. The danger is that when we are thinking by using such limiting boundary concepts, we are taken away from the world of appearances, drawn into an abstract and pure conceptual world, and thereby losing the sense of worldly reality since worldly reality innately hinges upon common sense, with which we are able to orient ourselves in the world. In this dialectical way, therefore, Arendt was positively affirming the question of no-bodyness as anti-nihilistic regarding its erosive effect in destroying the very foundation of traditional ontology and metaphysics (to which I shall return in 2.2).

Significantly positive, the question of no-bodyness addresses the existential anxiety in a labouring and consuming society in which human life is reduced to a recurring cycle, without beginning or ending. In the way that zero is the reference for us ever to think of number as a logical system, nobodyness could be the start of Arendt’s attempt to address the modern *aporia* of losing sight of existential ground. Or, take another instance, seen from the perspective of an individual person, nobodyness designates the possibility of human being as death, as well as traceless; whilst from the perspective of human beings as a collective whole, nobodyness can be understood not as an end of a civilization such as the lost

¹¹⁹ “The basic question of metaphysics” as ‘Why is there anything and not rather nothing?’ – was in a way thinking’s first question but at the same time the thought to which it always has to swing back” (Arendt, *The Life of the Mind: Thinking*, p. 124); this passage is quoted by Arendt from Heidegger’s *Wegmarken*, p. 19.

ancient cities of Athens and Pompeii, but a “forgetfulness of being” as non-existence, a total loss. There is no historical site for us to remember, to inherit and to leave behind.

By regarding existential anxiety as nobodyness, now we can attempt to substantiate Arendt’s venture into the realm of the ineffability of human experiences. For Arendt, since Parmenides, thinkers have been attracted by the ‘invisible’ ‘imperceptible’ but implicitly appearing ‘being’. Being is seemingly “the most empty and general, the least meaningful word in our vocabulary” (LM, I 144). However, the scandal of the most general being is that nothingness is unthinkable but we nevertheless try hard to think it (145). The ineffable seems to have escaped human knowledge whilst in fact it “had not escaped but even haunted human reason” insofar as we do our thinking.¹²⁰ In this regard, what abandons us in knowing immediately captures us in thinking.

The fact is that there is a cognitive barrier which refuses linguistic access to a particular area, an area which perplexed Arendt, where “nobody can think Being without at the same time thinking nothingness, or think Meaning without thinking futility, vanity, meaninglessness”. Arendt therefore appealed to Heidegger’s “existential, meta-logical solution” to ask the question of nobodyness (LM, I 149).

Traditionally, the ineffable refers to Platonic speechless wonder as the *arche* of philosophy or the initial shock of philosophers. Later, the ineffable in Aristotle is characterized as something fundamental yet inexpressible, such as truth as *aneu logou* (without speech). Yet Heidegger evinced the presupposition of the absoluteness in Platonic wonder into asking: Why is there anything instead of nothing?

Seen through Heidegger, the existential anxiety as nobodyness, like nothingness, robs us of speech, puts us into a void and leaves us hovering and hanging (WM, 101).¹²¹ We are at a loss in terms of how to define, locate and

¹²⁰ Arendt drew the distinction between thinking and knowing.

¹²¹ “Anxiety reveals the nothing ... We ‘hover’ in anxiety. Anxiety robs us of speech. Because beings as a

present the anxiety – a degree of ineffableness. Indeed, ineffableness is a genuine human experience which prevents the question of the human from slipping away from us, and further, pushes us into a state of being adjacent to being.

However, the positive side of the question of nobodyness brings to light the awareness of the human capacity to experience and name the ineffable, instead of simply avoiding and taking the question of the human for granted. Thus, the anti-nihilistic question of nobodyness, in a positive sense, addresses the ineffability of human experiences, particularly when modern human beings rely too much on the technological perspective and do not trust their own intuition, sensational experiences or anything that strikes them as ineffable.

The significance of this question of nobodyness is not the social experiences of losses which are usually acknowledged by Arendtian scholars, such as the withering of public space, the modern loss of speech, the crisis of authority, the rightless and stateless people.¹²² Rather, the contingency is the modern anxiety over existence which manifests itself on two levels: first, the fear of being replaced by machines (as indicated in the Introduction), and second, the fear of becoming a nobody – being dehumanized.

Now, let us return to the question: since when has wanting an existential grounding become a political task? It begins when we cannot help but experience some degree of loss¹²³ such as the atrophy of public space (the loss of the *polis*), the dwindling power of human speech (the loss of *logos*), the disempowered lovers (the loss of *amor mundi*), the crisis of authority and the uncertified tradition (the loss of *auctoritas*).

So instead of addressing social phenomena regarding these losses, this

whole slip away, so that just the nothing crowds round, in the face of anxiety all utterance of the 'is' falls silent."

¹²² CANOVAN, M. 2008. The Contradictions of Hannah Arendt's Political Thought. In: ALLEN, A. (ed.) *Hannah Arendt*. Ashgate.

¹²³ See *Introduction* by Margaret Canovan and the *Prologue* by Arendt.

thesis takes a shift and reconstructs the existential phenomena regarding the modern loss of the human: the experience of ineffability and the capacity to world both constitute the transcendental ground of the human. In this chapter, I primarily focus on the experience of the ineffable and the corresponding naming power to translate the ineffable.

In the following section, I shall demonstrate the challenge in terms of the ineffability of human experiences by exploring Heidegger's project of metaphysics, which is the "*fate* of the West and the presupposition of its *planetary* dominance"¹²⁴ and obviously more than simply a philosophical decoration or "the title for the philosophical difficulty".¹²⁵

2.2 Affirming transcendence: the critique and defence of metaphysics

In order to establish an existential ground of transcendence in Arendt's conception of the human through the ineffability of being human, in this section I shall investigate the first half of Arendt's indebtedness to Heidegger regarding the notion of transcendence first through metaphysics and then phenomenology. Heidegger's project of metaphysics provided Arendt not only with an embryonic moment of political theorizing at her early intellectual stage but also with the theoretical basis for her critique and defence of the metaphysical two-world theory.

For thousands of years, philosophy, metaphysics and ontology have sought access to the world of the unperceivable and non-sensible. Philosophers have never stopped trying to affirm an absoluteness of Being in cognition. The significance of this way of reading is that it demonstrates that Arendt approached philosophy through the lens of her political deliberation on the world. And at the same time, she transformed the transcendental part of human in terms of politics without compromising the philosophical complexity. More compellingly, she

¹²⁴ Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics" in *The End of Philosophy*, p. 90. (italics by the current author).

¹²⁵ HEIDEGGER, M. 1997. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. TAFT, R., Indiana University Press.

consciously challenged the rigid structure of the ontological and theological way of thinking – the metaphysical two-world theory. Instead, politics seems to make the issue of transcendence more profound by highlighting the nature of the existential finitude and the world-building capacity as transcending which are likely to be overlooked in modern political theory.

I therefore focus on the human capacity to transcend (carry over) the ineffable in Arendt's political writing. What is ineffable is universally 'acknowledged' but individually 'experienced' – we share a common world which we inherited and created together, but our experience of the world is not sharable or demonstrable. Heidegger, however, sees this insignificance of human life against a background of the immense magnitude of the universe not to espouse the view of nihilism, but to reclaim a metaphysics which could pose a challenge to the thinking of the canonized tradition. In view of this, Heidegger sought to uproot "the metaphysical generated grounds for life" in order to re-vitalise "what is the most meaningful – and what is most unprovable and least illustratable – in our lives," as Scott suggested.¹²⁶ In other words, metaphor provides a way for understanding how it is possible to name the ineffable, that is, not through categorizing but through handing over. I shall try to settle the question: in what sense do I apply the terms 'meta' and 'transcendence' to Arendt's political thinking insofar as both terms are derived from metaphysics, which Arendt was determined to dismantle.

Following Heidegger, Arendt worked from within the metaphysical tradition in her own political thought. As the foundation which supports Arendt's political theory, the phenomenal nature of the world strategically and fundamentally dissolves and undoes the traditional metaphysical two-worlds theory that there are a sensible physical world and a supersensible meta-physical and transcendental world. Traditional metaphysics, from Arendt's perspective, pursues the universal and eternal truth and is hostile towards the political, which

¹²⁶ SCOTT, C. E. 2001. *The Appearance of Metaphysics. A Companion to Heidegger's Introduction to Metaphysics.* (Gregory Fried & Richard Polt, Eds.). New Haven: Yale UP.

is plural, contingent and circumstantial in nature.¹²⁷ Even so, she also admitted that with the sensible given world gone, the non-sensible transcendent world disappears as well (HC, 288). In other words, ever since the void left by the total disappearance of the transcendental, super-sensible realm, traditional metaphysics, with the faith in God, lost its validity in the secular world.¹²⁸ Instead of compensating the loss, Arendt determined to dismantle metaphysics, mainly by delving behind the “reified subject/object distinction to articulate the structure of our pre-theoretical being-in-the-world”, as Villa suggested.¹²⁹

According to Heidegger, when Nietzsche pronounced “God is Dead” in *The Gay Science*, it pretty much meant that “the *supersensory world* is without effective power” and it “bestows no life.” In view of this, metaphysics is “at an end”.¹³⁰ What concerns Heidegger in terms of the problem of metaphysics, however, is that western metaphysics after Aristotle derailed from the system created by Aristotle and rather owed its development to “a lack of understanding concerning *the questionable* and *open* nature of the central problem left by Plato and Aristotle”.¹³¹ Heidegger was therefore determined to give approval to metaphysics again.

The concept of *meta-physical* itself manifests a hierarchical layered division of a world which is physical and a world which is beyond the physical – the transcendence, and this division gets intensified by the Christian interpretation of the world as a division between the divine and the created. For Kant, there were worlds of phenomena which are accessible for human experience, and worlds of transcendental *noumena* or *Ding an sich selbst* (‘things in themselves’) which are unknowable to and beyond human perception.

¹²⁷ See Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger*, and TAMINIAUX, J. 1997. *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger*, SUNY Press.

¹²⁸ Like many other philosophical concepts, we use them but never really understand their meanings. We think that we know what ‘metaphysical’ is and use the term unthinkingly.

¹²⁹ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press.

¹³⁰ Heidegger, “*The world of Nietzsche*” from HEIDEGGER, M. 1998. *Pathmarks*, trans. MCNEIL, W., Cambridge University Press.

¹³¹ HEIDEGGER, M. 1997. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. TAFT, R., Indiana University Press. p. 5.

The notion of transcendence means that thought and meaning are possible only because human beings are capable of reason by which human existence extends “beyond the mere givenness of finite experience”, according to Kant.¹³² And for Heidegger, transcendence is manifested when human beings question themselves regarding the ground of everything – a structurally ontological rendering of the ‘on.’ In seeking the ground, transcendence is “attested by the fundamental mood of anxiety” about the “moment of vision” of human beings, and the ineffable anxiety also reveals that the traditional ontological ground is not an assured subsistence as believed, but the finite temporality to which “proximally and for the most part” we are blind.¹³³

Therefore, what is knowable determines the scope of finite knowledge, and this is the being which shows itself (phenomenon). Essentially, peeking into what is beyond sensibility is a kind of overstepping, or leaping beyond (*meta-*). “In overstepping the sensible,” as Heidegger says, metaphysics as pure, rational knowledge of what is common to all beings “seeks to grasp supersensible being.”¹³⁴ The finitude of human pure reason is the essential core of this self-knowing as well as the ground for metaphysics. The *factum* of the finitude of human knowledge is not limited to deficiencies such as instability, imprecision and (the potentiality of) making errors, but rather lies in the essential structure of knowledge itself: that knowing is primarily intuiting.

All thinking is merely in service to intuition and thus knowing.¹³⁵ For instance, time and space are therefore “only sensible forms of our intuition, but not determinations given for themselves or conditions of objects as things in themselves”.¹³⁶ That is, the traditional understanding of absolute space and immemorial time which are witnessing and referencing the history of human

¹³² GENDRE, M. 1992. Transcendence and Judgment in Arendt's Phenomenology of Action. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 18, 29-50.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ HEIDEGGER, M. 1997. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. TAFT, R., Indiana University Press. p. 6.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

p, 16, of Kant's A320, B 375f.

¹³⁶ KANT, I. & GUYER, P. 1998. *Critique of Pure Reason*, Cambridge University Press.

civilization may not be absolute.

In order to present the ineffable, we therefore need to “give our approval to ‘metaphysics’ again” (BT, 2) and we need to admit the inevitability that “every determination of the essence of man ... is metaphysical” (LH, 255-6). Heidegger traces the root of modern anxiety back to metaphysics in terms of how its language denies entrance into the question of the meaning of being, and its rescue is possible only when the question ‘What is metaphysics?’ is posed “in the midst of metaphysics’ domination” (LH, 226), because traditional metaphysics overlooked the ineffable dimension of (human) being from the very beginning. For Heidegger, human being transcends in the sense that the transcendence belongs to the supersensible realm (LH, 252).

Following Heidegger, Arendt wrote similar comments about Nietzsche’s announcement that ‘God is dead’. According to Arendt, what was really ‘dead’ is the distinction between the sensible and super-sensible.¹³⁷ The consequences of our situation following the demise of metaphysics and philosophy are twofold. First, it would enable us to look on the past with new eyes, undisturbed and unguided by any traditions. Second, it would entail the growing inability to move in the realm of the supersensible (LM, I 12).

Following Heidegger, in particular, Arendt found the metaphysical two-world theory a fatal fallacy in terms of the structure, so to speak, because the “old metaphysical dichotomy of (true) Being and (mere) Appearance” is based on the supremacy of the hidden substantial ground, which is hierarchically higher than what is given to our eyes or other senses (LM, I 25). The division is constituted by one world of substantial entity (the ontological ground as transcendence, the absolute divinity or ideal Form), which is placed above or beyond the other secular, imitated and humanly made world.

Even so, the two-world theory provides structural support for the traditional

¹³⁷ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press.

metaphysical way of classifying things into various categories which describe the properties, features and characters of things into cross-referring dualities such as subject/object, internal/external and falsity/truth. Usually among Arendtian readers, concepts and terms can be distinguished between 'existentials' and 'categories'; the former describe "what it means to be, from the viewpoint of human being, and the latter is taking a vantage point as a scientific observer".¹³⁸ So although Arendt rejected the iron-like structural fallacy of metaphysics, she valued the distinction between a sensible and a super-sensible world which simultaneously crumbled down with the demise of the realm of invisible, intangible, impalpable, or super-sensible – where we experience some ineffability.

Even if the two-world theory is nothing but a "metaphysical delusion", it is not accidental.¹³⁹ It has survived for so many centuries because it "plausibly corresponds to some basic experiences". As "the most plausible delusion", the two-world theory has plagued the realm of thinking ever since there has been the human experience of thought (LM, I 110). The two-world theory retains the very instincts about the basic distinctions of human experiences: visible/invisible to the eyes, audible/inaudible to the ears, tangible/intangible to the skin, even if these distinctions are roughly categorized and miss the subtlety of minute and intricate differences. The characteristic invisibility, inaudibility and intangibility do not vanish when we do our thinking, speaking, loving, remembering and perceiving. Rather, all the mental activities are invisibly happening; only the eyes of the soul, in the Platonic metaphor, can penetratingly see through to them, ideally speaking (LM, I 22-23). By dissolving the dichotomy, Arendt accentuated the primacy of appearances, which not just visibly reveal but also conceal into the invisible.

¹³⁸ The 'existentials' are not to be understood empirically as people usually do, but seek to "illuminate what it means to be-in-the-world"; the concept of the world, understood as a meaningful context, is among the 'existentials'. HINCHMAN, L. P. & HINCHMAN, S. K. 1984. In Heidegger's Shadow: Hannah Arendt's Phenomenological Humanism. *The Review of Politics*, 46, 183-211. 197. VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press., pp. 173-174. TAMINIAUX, J. 1997. *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger*, SUNY Press. p.4.

¹³⁹ Especially in *The Life of the Mind*, where she discusses how thinking uses metaphors to bridge the gap between visible and invisible. Phenomenologists, including Arendt, hold that the two-world theory that a sensible (*phusis*) and a transcendental supersensible (*metaphusis*) world is a just metaphysical fallacy – a delusion.

One thing is certain: metaphysics “deals with matters that were not given to sense-perception” and the sense experience transcends the “common sense reasoning” which can be “validated by empirical tests and means” (LM, I 13). As a philosophical tool, the aim of metaphysics is to reason “beyond the limitations of the sensibly given world”, and to “*eliminate the obstacles by which reason hinders itself*” (LM, I 14-15). Philosophers were convinced that in order to deal with these invisible matters, “man had to detach his mind from the senses by detaching it both from the world as given by them and from the sensations – or passions – aroused by sense-objects” (13). To deal with the invisible, man has to withdraw from the world of appearances, according to Arendt.

In view of this, I agree with Michael Gendre’s (1992) view of a direct linear inheritance from Kant to Heidegger and Arendt in terms of the concept of transcendence. For Gendre, the Kantian concept of transcendence may have been “integrated, superseded, or set aside” through Heidegger to Arendt. Gendre investigated Arendt’s phenomenology of action through an examination of how she applied the Kantian notion of transcendence in the reflexive human capacity for aesthetic judgment and practical politics.¹⁴⁰

To summarize, to understand Arendt’s conception of human being, I try to defend Arendt’s use of metaphor for highlighting the ineffable dimension of human, which I designate as meta or transcendental.¹⁴¹ I have demonstrated how Arendt confirmed the transcendence through the ineffability of human experiences between the sensible and supersensible worlds in the light of Heidegger’s approval of metaphysics. I shall next consider the hermeneutic phenomenological approach towards the transcendence of the ineffability of being human.

¹⁴⁰ GENDRE, M. 1992. Transcendence and Judgment in Arendt's Phenomenology of Action. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 18, 29-50.

¹⁴¹ In view of this, for Jack Reilly (2015), the only way to represent such a moment of political transformation as the founding of the Rome is through paradox and metaphor and although with a similar solution, I chose a different approach to this subject by seeking access within human existence. REILLY, J. 2015. Chronology, Narrative, and Founding Acts: Between a Transcendental Rock and a Decisionist Hard Place. *Utopia and Political Theory*, 2.

2.3 Presenting the transcendence: hermeneutic phenomenology

After granting approval to metaphysics, in this section I shall seek to demonstrate how hermeneutic phenomenology can remedy the demise of traditional metaphysics in the realm of the supersensible as the transcendental motif in Heidegger.¹⁴² As a parallel thread, I shall also analyse the second aspect of Arendt's indebtedness to Heidegger concerning the notion of transcendence from a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective. First, I shall introduce how Husserl and Heidegger, teacher and student, examined phenomenological investigation as a method of accessing (human) being as transcendence. Second, I shall investigate how Heidegger understands the transcendental horizon of eventful hermeneutics.

As discussed previously, the danger to our essence under the dominance of modern metaphysics is that language denies our entrance to the essence of metaphysics as openness and questionableness. Lacking access, even the most obvious inexplicable is automatically categorized into something we call 'mystery', which confronts us precisely by its incomprehensibility (LH, 222-3). Thus Heidegger uses hermeneutic phenomenology as a methodological design to address the issue. On the one hand, the questionableness can be re-established in phenomenology, which designates it as a 'quest' (*logos*) for knowledge of phenomena; on the other hand, the fundamental hermeneutical question concerns the adequacy of the openness concerning interpretive space which enables 'things' to be.¹⁴³

¹⁴² GORNER, P. 2002. Heidegger's Phenomenology as Transcendental Philosophy. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 10, 17–33, KLUN, B. 2007. Transcendence and Time: Levinas's Criticism of Heidegger. *Gregorianum*, 88, 587-603, THOMSON, I. 2011. Transcendence and the Problem of Otherworldly Nihilism: Taylor, Heidegger, Nietzsche. *Inquiry*, 54, 140-159, ENGELLAND, C. 2012. Disentangling Heidegger's Transcendental Questions. *Continental Philosophy Review*, 45, 77-100, MORAN, D. 2014. What Does Heidegger Mean by the Transcendence of Dasein? *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 22, 491–514, WENTZER, T. S. 2017. Rethinking Transcendence: Heidegger, Plessner and the Problem of Anthropology. *Ibid.* 25, 348–362.

¹⁴³ "Without the original revelation of the nothing, no selfhood and no freedom ... For human existence, the nothing makes possible the openness of beings as such." (WM, 103-104)

Phenomenology confines its subject matter to the world of appearances. By abolishing Kant's entire realm of the "noumenal world", Husserl and his phenomenology essentially focused on the world lived (*erlebt*) or the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*).¹⁴⁴ The world for Husserl is a world experienced and lived. For Husserl, there is no world beyond the "data of consciousness" which we collect and take our bearing from. In particular, the lifeworld for Husserl is understood as a pre-given world lived by human beings, instead of some detached object separated from human.¹⁴⁵ This lifeworld is experienced and accepted pre-reflectively without resorting to categorical thinking or theoretical conceptualization and is usually understood as common sense.¹⁴⁶ This lifeworld, however, is *my* lifeworld, shared inter-subjectively among us by taking for granted not only the everyday life in which we live, but also the other men living in *my* world.¹⁴⁷

As a methodological principle, phenomenology is a study seeking to return to and re-examine meanings taken for granted, or uncovering forgotten meanings.¹⁴⁸ Husserl wanted phenomenology to be a pure, presuppositionless and systematic scientific description of the world and human. He sees this method as a way of turning meaning into reality. In this regard, phenomenology is a movement away from the Cartesian dualism of reality or world being something 'out there', detached, isolated from human being.¹⁴⁹ Husserl wanted to study phenomena as they appear through consciousness in the way that both

¹⁴⁴ For Husserl, the lifeworld is fundamental for all epistemological enquiries. Through the pre-epistemological analysis of lifeworld, Husserl sought to establish a new science of being: phenomenology.

¹⁴⁵ VALLE, R. S., KING, M. & HALLING, S. 1989. An Introduction to Existential-Phenomenological Thought in Psychology. *Existential-Phenomenological Perspectives in Psychology*. Springer.

¹⁴⁶ HUSSERL, E. 1970. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, Northwestern University Press.

¹⁴⁷ SCHUTZ, A. & LUCKMANN, T. 1973. *The Structures of the Life-world*, Northwestern University Press, HUSSERL, E. 1970. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, Northwestern University Press, CARR, D. 1970. Husserl's Problematic Concept of the Life-World. *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 7, 331-339. Husserl traces back to the pre-given world: "It is pre-given to us all quite naturally, as persons within the horizon of our fellow men, i.e., in every actual connection with others, as 'the' world common to us all. Thus it is ... the constant of validity, an available source of what is taken for granted, to which we, whether as practical men or as scientists, lay claim as a matter of course" (*ibid*).

¹⁴⁸ Phenomenology for modern researchers is an empirical qualitative research method, but for Husserl it was his way of challenging things which are traditionally taken for granted.

¹⁴⁹ LAVERTY, S. M. 2003. Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2, 21-35.

the human mind and its objects happen within experience; he viewed consciousness as a co-constituted dialogue between man and the world.¹⁵⁰

For Husserl, what makes the structure of the phenomena of the world or reality accessible and observable is not a process of induction or generalization, but a direct grasping of a phenomenon as an intentional process. The lifeworld is a necessary stage on the way to transcendental subjectivity for Husserl, and being true to Husserl is much less important than being true to the *Sachen selbst* ('to the things themselves'). The interpretive method takes into account meaning and context to build one's knowledge of reality which is particularly developed by intentionally directing one's focus away from theories and away from books to the things themselves. In a word, Husserl tried to create, through phenomenological investigation, something like a meaningful subject by seeking meaning in human existence.

More radical than his teacher, Heidegger criticized how the Cartesian world as *res extensa* is ontologically grounded in the idea that substantiality, which remains unclarified and 'passed off' as incapable of clarification. The senses, toward a definite subject-matter, a waxen *Thing* which is coloured, smelled, hard and cold, and so on, are incapable of clarification. The senses, for Descartes, "do not enable us to cognize" being, except by announcing the external corporeal existence; for instance, the waxen corporeal Thing is primarily characterized as hardness as resistance only because it is not yielding its place or changing its location.¹⁵¹

To put it simply, there are things which are not "merely objects of *thought*" but can also be '*perceived*'. Phenomenology is the study of such non-sensory seeing or intuiting. To work out a genuinely comprehensive methodological concept, Heidegger turns to phenomenology, which is designated as the "science of

¹⁵⁰ VALLE, R. S., KING, M. & HALLING, S. 1989. An Introduction to Existential-Phenomenological Thought in Psychology. *Existential-Phenomenological Perspectives in Psychology*. Springer.

¹⁵¹ In this way, "Descartes has narrowed down the question of the world to that of Things of Nature ... which are proximally accessible". See section 18-20, see Heidegger, *Being and Time*.

phenomena”, a term composed of two concepts: ‘phenomenon’ and the ‘logos’.¹⁵² Phenomenology “signifies a distinctive way in which something can be encountered” and represents the “underlying principle of any scientific knowledge whatsoever” (BT, 50-54). The phenomenon of the world was overlooked at the beginning of the ontological tradition. That is to say, the tradition lost the horizon within which we could have access to the world.

Phenomenology is our way of *access* to what is to be the theme of ontology, and it is our way of giving it *demonstrative precision*. Only as phenomenology, is ontology possible. (BT, 61, italics by the current author)

Engaging in an holistic worldview, Heidegger obviously expanded the horizon within which the ontological intelligibility of the concept of being becomes accessible. Fundamentally it is associated with but still different from the philosophical bases, assumptions, focuses of research and research outcomes,¹⁵³ whereas hermeneutic phenomenology is seeking access to life in its hermeneutic facticity which “must work counter to the natural and theoretical tendency which objectifies and reifies our experience”:¹⁵⁴

If hermeneutics is the exposition of the hidden meaning, then life’s facticity in its self-generative power of articulation is of itself hermeneutical.¹⁵⁵

So in an attempt to overcome the absurdity of such a fundamental presupposition to which we have limited knowledge and access on the one hand, and the fact that we cannot resist such “repeated objection” of the external world which presupposes on the other, during 1919-20, Heidegger developed an analysis of

¹⁵² Heidegger’s use of the expression ‘phenomenology’ simply and primarily signifies a ‘methodological conception’. As a methodological conception, phenomenology “does not characterize *the what* of the objects of philosophical research as subject-matter, but rather *the how* of that research.” (BT, 50)

¹⁵³ LAVERTY, S. M. 2003. Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2, 21-35.

¹⁵⁴ KISIEL, T. 1995. *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*, University of California Press.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

the environmental world in the larger context of a hermeneutics of facticity. What is 'the hermeneutics of facticity?' It is the genesis of human experience.

The human experiences which give rise to the meaning or hermeneutic meaning of the world are what Heidegger really cares about. Just as the root word 'Hermes', a messenger from heaven, indicates that words or language are themselves meaningful, for Heidegger, phenomenology must be hermeneutical or interpretive, "like the illuminating construal of a text, that is, hermeneutical phenomenology offers insight not just by exhibiting what is already self-evident in awareness, but by drawing out, eliciting, evoking, uncovering what lies hidden or buried in and around whatever manifests itself openly in the world" (BT, Intro, xviii). The hermeneutic meaning is changing all the time depending on the world which it encounters. Heidegger therefore sought an answer from human existence and man's interaction with the world. Human beings, according to phenomenologists, are always worldly beings, situated beings. They unfold their own existence by understanding and interpreting meaningfulness out of their own worlding or 'being in the world'. To 'be there' (*Da-sein*) simply means to be in the world. We simply find ourselves in the midst of the world.

By way of hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation of the capacity to transcend, the significance of 'words' cannot be ignored, although words do not have the capacity to make sense of everything, to explain everything and therefore to finalise and ground everything. Hermeneutics is like playing a game: the rules of the game with which the players must comply are the original meanings and experiences which give rise to the words. By obeying the rules, the players can decide freely how and with whom to play. This, I believe, is the hermeneutic facticity to which Heidegger referred. For instance, Boym wrote that "love is an endless hermeneutics of moods".¹⁵⁶

Moreover, Heidegger's understanding of human being is transcendental:

¹⁵⁶ BOYM, S. 2009. From Love to Worldliness: Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger. *Yearbook of Comparative Literature*, 55, 106-128. P. 110.

Da-sein means: being held out into the nothing ... Dasein is in each case already beyond things as a whole. This being beyond beings we call 'transcendence'. If in the ground of its essence Dasein were not transcending, which now means, if it were not in advance holding itself into the nothing, then it could never be related to beings nor even to itself. (BW, 201-3)

Phenomenology is now understood as a method of transcendental philosophy which is necessarily reflective and circling back, though not in a metaphysical way (BT, 62)¹⁵⁷ and the hermeneutic possibility of penetrating a given phenomenon or a 'thing' depends on how we approach the phenomenon. Heidegger's notion of hermeneutics corresponds to the primacy of possibility on the level of penetrability, with "greater or lesser originality, or the 'fullness' (genuineness, authenticity), of lived life".¹⁵⁸

As transcendence for human being, 'world' is an object of consciousness for Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, whereas for Heidegger, world is a "referential whole".¹⁵⁹ For Heidegger, the world is the universal horizon rather than the object of consciousness: what a hammer is is constituted in hammering. In our attitude towards the world, "we never think a single thing ... We always think it from out of a contexture (*Zusammenhang*) of things to which it belongs: wall, room, surroundings". The nearest things are those which we take for granted: "stairs, corridor, windows, chair, benches, blackboard"; those things are "there for us in passing them, avoiding bumping into them and so on."¹⁶⁰

Heidegger criticized Husserl's "immanent transcendence" for building upon a structure of stream of consciousness and intentionality, which still sticks to the traditional perception of human being in terms of a layered structure of body, soul

¹⁵⁷ Original italics. "*Phenomenological truth (the disclosedness of Being) is veritas transcendentalis.*"

¹⁵⁸ KLUN, B. 2018. Horizon, Transcendence, and Correlation: Some Phenomenological Considerations. *Journal for Cultural & Religious Theory*, 17, 354-366.

¹⁵⁹ See GORNER, P. 2002. Heidegger's Phenomenology as Transcendental Philosophy. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 10, 17-33.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* Also, BORREN, M. 2013. 'A Sense of the World': Hannah Arendt's Hermeneutic Phenomenology of Common Sense. *Ibid.* 21, 225-255.

and spirit.¹⁶¹ One typical example of the traditional understanding of transcendence is found in Christianity: ‘God is *beyond* the world’; here, transcendence means that which is beyond the sensible, the corporeal and the flesh. Heidegger, however, offers a new way of thinking and interpreting transcendence in a non-subjective manner. He understands how human beings “ontologically transcend” with regard to how human existence is already ‘beyond’. Transcendence is something which uniquely belongs to human beings. By keeping distance from the traditional concept of transcendence, Heidegger articulates human being itself as a “‘transcendence’, a ‘stepping over’, a ‘passage across’, a ‘surpassing’”:¹⁶² “What man is ... lies in his ek-sistence.” (LH, 229).

For Heidegger, a hermeneutic horizon was time itself. Time is the horizon of Being (BT, 398). Life is a living, happening, streaming event whereas a phenomenon can only be appropriated as an event. For instance, the narratives between a botanist and a painter will be based on different perspectives even when they walk into the same garden on the same sunny morning. Understanding and granting meaning to the same ‘Thing’ are always varied as the phenomenon is changing all the time.

Thus human existence is the entry into the (un)concealment of being. Human existence as ecstatic entry does not mean proceeding from some inside to some outside; rather, wrote Heidegger, “the essence of Existenz is out-standing standing-within the essential sunderance of the clearing of beings”. Such an entry is ecstatic, a jumping out but still remaining oneself, also known as ‘existential self-transcendence’. By emphasizing the ek-static character of human, in the *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger quoted from *Being and Time*: “*Being is the transcendens pure and simple*” (LH, 240; BT, 62, italics in the original). He looks

¹⁶¹ Being critical of Husserl’s immanent transcendence, Heidegger advocated a finite transcendence based on Dasein’s temporality.

¹⁶² MORAN, D. 2014. What Does Heidegger Mean by the Transcendence of Dasein? *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 22, 491–514. “He uses both nominal and verbal forms: Transzendenz, transzendieren [to transcend] as well as equivalent terms, in particular übersteigen [to climb over, surmount, exceed, transcend] and überschreiten [to cross, exceed, and also to overstep, to transgress]. As he puts it in his last Marburg lecture course of 1928, ‘Dasein is itself the passage across [Das Dasein selbst ist der Überschritt]’ (GA 26, p. 211).” p. 497.

right in the face of the inaccessibility of the technological scientific gaze instead of passing it by as traditional ontology did in presupposing a substantial area, as if such an area is both self-evident and trivial. The explained world from a scientific perspective might sound dominating, but it cannot replace other possible worlds which the human can easily feel in everyday life without equivalent words to represent oneself. Heidegger is obsessed with the question of (human) being as inaccessible to metaphysics as such, therefore, he urges his readers to learn to exist in the 'nameless' if they are to find their way into the "nearness of being" (LH, 223-4). In order to let the incomprehensibility be, Heidegger engaged in liberating the essence of metaphysics. Nothing can designate the sort of thing, such as a feeling or a mood, which remains concealed from us; or specifically, those things which deny any scientific precision and concreteness. In such a case, I draw Heidegger's interpretation of transcendence through which I attempt to reconstruct a *meta* dimension of human out of Arendt.¹⁶³

Transcendence is constituted with human existence:¹⁶⁴

What we call a 'feeling' is neither a transitory epiphenomenon of our thinking and willing behavior nor simply an impulse that provokes such behavior nor merely a present condition we have to put up with somehow or other. (WM, 100)

In this case, everydayness is the proximal point to open such an inquiry into human being. As Heidegger clarified, everydayness is not some sociological way

¹⁶³ Arendt witnessed how the study of *man* has completed its epistemological revolution and phenomenological transformation from Descartes' metaphysical bridge between subjectivism and the world, to Kant's distinction between "phenomenon" (appearance) and "*noumena*" (things in themselves), to Husserl's abolishment of the entire "*noumenal* world", and to Heidegger's fundamental ontology.

¹⁶⁴ Many have discussed the transcendence in Heidegger's phenomenological interpretation of human being. GORNER, P. 2002. Heidegger's Phenomenology as Transcendental Philosophy. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 10, 17-33., ENGELLAND, C. 2012. Disentangling Heidegger's Transcendental Questions. *Continental Philosophy Review*, 45, 77-100. WENTZER, T. S. 2017. Rethinking Transcendence: Heidegger, Plessner and the Problem of Anthropology. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 25, 348-362. THOMSON, I. 2011. Transcendence and the Problem of Otherworldly Nihilism: Taylor, Heidegger, Nietzsche. *Inquiry*, 54, 140-159. KLUN, B. 2018. Horizon, Transcendence, and Correlation: Some Phenomenological Considerations. *Journal for Cultural & Religious Theory*, 17, 354-366.

of portraying human existence, nor is it any kind of moral category; rather it is a way of articulating disclosure of and the truth of being.

In short, phenomenology poses a question of methodological conception itself and then becomes a plausible access and solution to the problems which Heidegger sensed in traditional ontology, especially that of Descartes. My research has a similar motif of chasing after the existential ground, questionableness and meaning, of Arendt's conception of the human. I demonstrate how Arendt continued to be pre-occupied with the instinct of metaphysical thinking, not in the traditional way, but rather in a Heideggerian way, a hermeneutic phenomenological way. Arendt advocated the absolute primacy of the world of appearances and sought the invisible and the ineffable, through terms such as the Platonic soul and idea, *psyche* and *eidōs*.¹⁶⁵

To sum up, transcendence as *meta* does not designate the traditional layered structure of body, mind or a combination of both, but an immanent capacity with which the comportment or activities toward others are carried out around the world with openness, while also introspectively inward to its being with questionableness.¹⁶⁶ The capacity is a gift from 'nowhere' and thereby resists presentability within modern metaphysics. Thus, rethinking the human becomes so important, especially when the scientific gaze could not possibly fathom, say, the "darkness of human heart" (*amor mundi*) and the "depth of human existence" (*auctoritas*), the most mysterious human questions. Those untraceable, undetectable and ineffable areas of human existence comprise the questionableness as the transcendental dimension of human being. After all, only the human reflects, by bending it back, the question toward its own existence. In the following section, I shall investigate how Arendt understood metaphorizing as

¹⁶⁵ "It is peculiar to phenomenological understanding that it can understand the incomprehensible, precisely in that it radically lets the latter be in its incomprehensibility", Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 64.

¹⁶⁶ However, when modern technological development, the powerful interpretive system of traditional metaphysics falls apart, phenomenology comes to the fore. Phenomenology breaks the structural defects of traditional metaphysics.

a way in which human names the ineffable, as a constitutive human capacity.

2.4 Naming the transcendence: the capacity of metaphorizing

In the final section of this chapter, I shall seek textual evidence to show Arendt's profound interest in the notion of transcendence, then I shall demonstrate how the idea of transcendence is closely related with the visibility of the *world* and the presentability, non-instrumentality and accessibility of the sheer worldly existence of human being. Finally, I shall show how human beings are capable of presenting the world as receptors with sense organs, and translate the invisible into visible through metaphors – the capacity to name the perceivably ineffable.

Arendt engaged herself with the notion of transcendence for her entire life, although she used the term variedly in different contexts. In *The Human Condition*, the term is still tainted with traditional metaphysics as an everlasting reference, such as transcendence in philosophy and theology. As Arendt said, without “transcendence into a potential earthly immortality, no politics, strictly speaking, no common world and no public realm, is possible” (HC, 55). Transcendence therefore designates the durability and permanence of the world – a potential earthly immortality. Elsewhere, Arendt's equivalent use of ‘transcendental’ seems a bit pejorative. She said that without a world or space of appearances to testify to phenomenal events, life and death are nothing but transcendental, non-worldly and antipolitical experiences (HC, 215).

Even so, Arendt's primary interest in transcendence can be found in *The Life of the Mind: Thinking* (LM, I) and, scarcely discussed, in her journal *Denktagebuch* (DTB). In these works, transcendence is mainly designated as the ineffability of human experiences as the sheer existence of being human. Characteristically, Arendt's notion of transcendence as ineffableness has three inter-related aspects: presentability, non-instrumentality and accessibility.

First, what is presentable is capable of being presented: “everything, that *is*,

appears.” The Arendtian schematic of transcendence is: “what is alive is *presentable*” because first, “it appears and disappears” and second, “it shows itself”. God is presentable to me because I can imagine the presence of God that can never be made to appear (DTB, 660). Indeed, everything that is must appear with definite shapes, with “sheer worldly existence” in other words, human existence (HC, 173).

Second, presentability is prior to instrumentality. By sheer existence, everything “also transcends the sphere of pure instrumentality”. In other words, everything that appears, with a particular shape, ugly or beautiful, transcends “its functional use”. Thus, the excellence of a thing is never judged by “mere usefulness” but by “its adequacy or inadequacy to what it should *look* like” (HC, 173).

Third, the core of transcendence is human existence as access to the supersensible realm. For everything which appears in a particular shape depends on “its beauty or ugliness” to me. I am awed into speechlessness by the beauty or sublimity, as suggested by Kant.¹⁶⁷ This particular kind of transcendence is therefore dependent on the human capacity to present the ineffableness. In other words, being alive, with given accessibility (such as imagination) to the ineffably invisible or intangible, is the core of transcendence (DTB, 660):

Everything that is, must appear, and nothing can appear without a shape of its own; hence there is in fact no thing that does not in some way *transcend* its functional use, and its *transcendence*, its beauty or ugliness, is identical with appearing publicly and being seen. By the same token, namely, in its sheer worldly existence, everything also *transcends* the sphere of pure instrumentality once it is completed. (HC, 173)

Ineffability as a borderline human experience does show that human

¹⁶⁷ See KANT, I. 1987. *Critique of Judgment*, Hackett Pub. Co.

existence is capable of transcending. Elaine Scarry (1987) discussed the borderline experience of pain as a way of dehumanization insofar as pain robs our speech to describe the most intense feeling. Pain is ineffable as it is the most private and the least communicable experience.¹⁶⁸ In view of this, the borderline experience of ineffability as a way of transcending is distinguished from the traditional understanding of transcendence as a way towards another world.

In the following section, I shall respond to two questions: how is ineffable different from private? And how is naming different from storytelling? To prevent further misunderstanding, I use 'ineffable' rather than 'private' to designate the specific primitive and authentic experience of thinking which can easily fall out of cognition and language. Correspondingly, I use 'naming' rather than 'storytelling' to highlight the pre-philosophical experience of 'metaphorizing' when we are confronted by specific obtrusiveness either on a daily basis or in rare moments.

The term 'private' has a broader connotation and usage than 'ineffable' in Arendt's writing. First, 'private' characterizes the hidden character of being human, so is ineffable. For Arendt, the private, as the "sacred hiddenness" of birth and death, the beginning and ending, represents the place where human life begins and returns to. What is exactly hidden must remain hidden from human eyes and impenetrable to human knowledge. And the hiddenness keeps its mysterious aura because, according to Arendt, "man does not know where he comes from when he is born or goes when he dies" (HC, 62-63).

Experience can therefore represent a private notion, but the notion of private, in Arendt's political writing, might possibly suggest clear boundaries, such as within four walls or inside the body. Hence, second, in Arendt's terminology, 'private' is more likely to be understood within the dialectic of private-public which highlights a public appearance as constitutive of human existence.¹⁶⁹ That is,

¹⁶⁸ SCARRY, E. 1987. *The Body in Pain : the Making and Unmaking of the World*, Oxford University Press.

¹⁶⁹ Arendt and Heidegger both presupposed a "surrounding area of hiddenness or darkness (the private)" against the "space of disclosure (the public realm)". To further understand the distinction of private and public in the light of Heidegger's concealment/unconcealment dialectic, see VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. pp. 145-7.

being private does not necessarily designate a state of deprivation of world; on the contrary, the dark private space is a necessary preparation for having a world, whereas the ineffable implies a deprivation of worldly appearance: what is beyond description is deprived of the cognitive and linguistic device to announce a presentable worldly existence. Thus, 'private' is viewed as a retreat or withdrawal, accompanied by 'action' as participation and belonging.

Third, ineffable experiences do not exclusively take place in private, but can also be more strongly felt in the public sphere by inter-acting with other people, conditioned by human plurality. But this ineffability does not necessarily designate 'private' which *should* be kept inside according to particular social or ethical norms. So to prevent further confusion, complexity and absurdity, I am reluctant to use the term 'private' with its political, ethical and sociological connotations which might prevent us from appreciating the isolated ineffable existentialistic human experience. For instance, Arendt's depiction of pain is the most radically isolated and incommunicable experience dissociated from any corporeal object. And her understanding is through the lens of a "Stoic version of happiness" – the "absence of pain", which is only attainable in isolation.¹⁷⁰ Thus, the transcendental experience of thinking does not necessarily happen in private but is something which we experience in solitude, especially when we come across cognitive and linguistic obtrusiveness.

In particular, in this thesis I use 'ineffable' in an attempt to emphasize what is bypassed by traditional metaphysics and its categories but is captured and problematized by the phenomenological gaze. Rather than private preparation for action, 'ineffable' involves the human activity of thinking, which requires us to stop acting. When you think, you withdraw from the world. For this reason, I am

¹⁷⁰ KRISTEVA, J. 2001. *Hannah Arendt: Life is a Narrative*, trans. COLLINS, F., University of Toronto Press. Nor has it anything to do with 'communicable eroticization' which can be insinuated as a sadomasochistic 'pleasure' 62. According to Kristeva, "The body never transcends nature, and it withdraws from the world in order to act only in the sphere of the private. Confined to the species and its maintenance, this body by that very fact appears as 'the only thing one cannot share,' and becomes the paradigm of private property. In withdrawal from the world, work and body, which is its organ, are the 'least common' of human aspects, and become the object of a pathos the violence of which we cannot measure without recalling the amor mundi which Arendt offers in counterpoint" p. 62,

going to talk about the role of metaphorizing, which was less often discussed by Arendt. Metaphorizing is a form of naming which does not necessarily tell a story but signifies an obtrusiveness which we feel, cognitively and linguistically, when encountering things and human affairs which make us think. Naming describes the most primitive capacity which is mysteriously given to us. By naming, I do not mean categorizing, rather, I highlight the role of metaphorizing as a way of visualizing or substantiating the mysterious ineffability into something which we are familiar with in our everyday life, with words which secure our own existence, instead of something which is dangerously new to comprehend.

Notably, in emphasizing naming, I am not rejecting Arendt's storytelling. On the contrary, I am well aware of the significance of story-telling – the very methodology which Arendt uses and justifies in her effort to narrate and crystallise the experiences of the storyteller in writing a history. This is not just a matter of disclosing people's identity, but of also articulating and even understanding their experience of the world. Indeed, human experience can be shared through imagination and storytelling, as scholars such as Benhabib, Villa, Lisa Disch, Garrath Williams and Annabel Herzog have emphasized.

Arendt's use of storytelling has been widely recognized and discussed. Storytelling carries the "methodological innovations" which Arendt made to defend how she arrived at her views, particularly in the *Origin of Totalitarianism*, where she regarded the phenomenon of totalitarianism as not only a moral problem but also an epistemological crisis.¹⁷¹ Benhabib described how Arendt used the metaphor of a pearl diver to describe her methodology, which was borrowed from Walter Benjamin, as "fragmentary historiography" as well as "inspired by the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger".¹⁷² Similarly, Kristeva noted the discord between 'lived history' and 'narrated history' and traced

¹⁷¹ See DISCH, L. J. 1993. More Truth Than Fact: Storytelling as Critical Understanding in the Writings of Hannah Arendt. *Political Theory*, 21, 665-694.

¹⁷² See BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. For the latter, "memory is the mimetic recollection of the lost origins of phenomena as contained in some fundamental human experience." p. 95. Benhabib also discussed Arendt's narrative methodology in "The Theorist as Storyteller" p. 91; "Action, Narrative, and the Web of Stories" p. 107; and "Rethinking Privacy" p. 211.

Arendt's concept of narrative back to a critic of Heidegger who sought to radicalize, essentialize, initialize and thereby, rationalize Being. Kristeva argued that "Arendt's notion of narrative is a careful deconstruction of Heidegger's Being and its poetic language".¹⁷³ For Lisa Disch, storytelling is a "critical understanding" which underscores the significance of the "personal experience of the thinker" or the storyteller, in the absence of the signposts: the traditional categories and standards.¹⁷⁴ In this regard, storytelling is applied as a way of understanding unprecedented political phenomena, theories and concepts. Furthermore, understanding is crucially important for us to take shared responsibility and we need to keep telling and retelling "stories of human action in the world, both as cautions and exemplars", according to Garrath Williams.¹⁷⁵ In this regard, narrative or storytelling is not merely a justifiable methodology but is also taken by scholars as a "fundamental human activity"¹⁷⁶ in a moral sense.

Even so, naming is not intended for understanding, but for metaphorizing, as poetic thinking. Before story-telling, we need language which capacitates our thinking and speaking in the first place. And how do we acquire language? Language is given when we first encounter 'things' with naming. Language comes in handy for naming which is manifested in the moment of thinking. To name something ineffable, we need the human capacity of metaphorizing. In this regard, from my perspective, it is Annabel Herzog who innovatively relates storytelling (as Arendt's political writing) with naming (or in Herzog's words, 'metaphorical' or 'poetic' thinking). Before storytelling, naming as metaphorical thinking establishes passages through different realms of the world or from field to field. This passage, as I understand it, is the transcendental dimension of human existence through which different senses can be mingled, "perfumes, colors, and sounds". This human capacity to transcend by naming (metaphorizing by mingling different

¹⁷³ See KRISTEVA, J. 2001. *Hannah Arendt: Life is a Narrative*, trans. COLLINS, F., University of Toronto Press. p. 27.

¹⁷⁴ DISCH, L. J. 1993. More Truth Than Fact: Storytelling as Critical Understanding in the Writings of Hannah Arendt. *Political Theory*, 21, 665-694.

¹⁷⁵ WILLIAMS, G. 2015. Disclosure and Responsibility in Arendt's *The Human Condition*. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 14, 37-54. p 48.

¹⁷⁶ BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. p. 92.

senses) comprises the upstream of storytelling, according to Herzog. The downstream of storytelling is the courage to lead a political life, to be free and distinct. Before words and deeds can be disclosed, a political life needs courage “to leave one’s private hiding place” behind in order to move into the world. This moving (or to use Herzog’s word, wandering) into the world means venturing an expedition or a trip, not necessarily onto a battlefield (ancient heroes remembered in the story of Troy told by Homer), but into the public realm (modern heroes who dare to wander around the world). In other words, fabricated with words and deeds, storytelling requires first and foremost the courage or willingness to disclose.¹⁷⁷ So naming and storytelling do not conflict, but rather mutually supplement and enhance each other.

Moreover, this capacity is not a feature or component which constitutes human being, as a question of ‘who’; rather transcendence is nothing but a capability or carrier of ‘being’ human, as a question of ‘how’. For instance, compared with Plato’s “quest for divine matters”, Arendt was more interested in “trivial and undignified objects”, humble attempts as “unseen measures” which “bind and determine human affairs”. She was more concerned with how those intangible things, such as “the starry sky and the deeds and destinies of men” can become “present in the visible world” (LM, I 151).

Thus transcendence as ineffableness has two forms: first, the borderline experience which cannot be described in language and second, the capacity of carrying over (metaphorizing), namely naming the ineffable. To demonstrate how human existence can access and name the ineffable regardless of the cognitive barrier imposed by metaphysics, I look to the first paragraph of the first section in *The Life of the Mind*: ‘The World’s Phenomenal Nature’:

The world men are born into contains many things, natural and

¹⁷⁷ HERZOG, A. 2001. The Poetic Nature of Political Disclosure: Hannah Arendt's Storytelling. *Clio*, 30, 169-194. Just as Herzog writes vividly, “to think poetically is to think metaphorically, or associatively, thereby discovering the correspondences between the various experiences of the world and between the different feelings of these experiences” p. 177.

artificial, living and dead, transient and sempiternal, all of which have in common that they appear and hence are meant to be seen, heard, touched, tasted and smelled, to be perceived by sentient creatures endowed with the appropriate sense organs. Nothing could appear, the word 'appearance' would make no sense, if recipients of appearances did not exist – living creatures able to acknowledge, recognize, and react to – in flight or desire, approval or disapproval, blame or praise – what is not merely there but appears to them and is meant for their perception. (LM, I 19, italics in the original)

This passage has significant implications insofar as it shows Arendt's relentless interest in the transcendental dimension of human existence regarding why human beings are capable of perceiving and presenting the world during man's phenomenally given time – the interval between birth and death. It therefore deserves subtler appreciation and a more sophisticated contextual interpretation from several relevant perspectives.

First, world is phenomenal in nature and is phenomenologically presentable only through human beings because the world is the most universal concept, it generally and generously contains all differences – “natural and artificial, living and dead, transient and sempiternal”. And the differences have one thing in common: they appear and therefore can be perceived – seen, heard, touched, tasted and smelled – through the relevant sense organs. It is us, human beings as sentient creatures, who are the providers or carriers of these sense organs. Or as Arendt emphasized, human beings are endowed with sense organs and are thereby “recipients of the appearances”. Without recipients or carriers, nothing could appear and appearances would make no sense. Only human beings are capable of acknowledging, recognizing and reacting to the phenomena of the world – “in flight or desire, approval or disapproval, blame or praise” – the meaningful indicators. In that case, the world exists only because it can be experienced through human existence. If the world is to be presentable, it needs human beings, and in turn it provides human existence with a sense of familiarity based on common sense – we all are endowed with sense organs, and

we all can see, hear, touch, smell, taste and feel – regarding the common ground of the world in which we dwell. Thus, the phenomenal world exists only through and for human beings.

Second, Arendt was keen on differentiating two levels of human life in *The Human Condition*. On the first level, human life as the engine of biological life belongs to nature. This level of life is an ever-recurring process which “uses up durability, wears it down, makes it disappear, until eventually dead matter, the result of small, single, cyclical life processes, returns into the over-all gigantic circle of nature herself, where no beginning and no end exist and where all natural things swing in changeless, deathless repetition” (HC, 96). On the second level, human life is related to a world into which human beings, by birth and death, appear and depart, as “unique, unexchangeable and unrepeatable” individuals. On this worldly level, the birth and death which constitute human life are more than just natural occurrences.¹⁷⁸

Only by being related to the world can the birth and death of human life be recorded as “the supreme events of appearance and disappearance within the world” (97). Only by being related to the world can the linear ever-recurring movement of time be cut out into a time interval, a moment, or fragment of time, as human life with a beginning and an end. Only by being related to the world can we dare to perceive time in the form of space; that is, time is only discernible as worldly spatial object, a time cake, time line, time arrow.

To take an example: the only presentable time is spatialized time, otherwise time is only intuitively perceivable but ineffable. Arendt quoted from Augustine’s *Confession*: “What then is time? If no one asks me, I know; if I wish to explain it to one that asks I know not”.¹⁷⁹ For sure, an alternative measurement of time is

¹⁷⁸ “Birth and death presuppose a world which is not in constant movement, but whose durability and relative permanence makes appearance and disappearance possible, which existed before any one individual appeared into it and will survive his eventual departure. Without a world into which men are born and from which they die, there would be nothing but changeless eternal recurrence, the deathless everlastingness of the human as of all other animal species.” (HC, 96-7)

¹⁷⁹ See Arendt, *Denktagebuch* p.766.

presentable only when we use our own limited existence on earth to imagine an ideally immemorial eternity, a philosophical transcendence. Similarly, the natural cycle of growth and decay is only meaningful within the human world, as is human life.

Arendt continued:

In this world which we enter, appearing from nowhere, and from which we disappear into a nowhere, *Being and Appearing coincide*. Dead matter, natural and artificial, changing and unchanging, depends in its being, that is, in its appearingness, on the presence of living creature. Nothing and nobody exist in this world whose very being does not presuppose a spectator. In other words, nothing, that is, insofar as it appears, exists in the singular; everything that is is meant to be perceived by somebody. Not Man but men inhabit this planet. *Plurality is the law of the earth*. (LM, I: 19, italics in the original)

Here, a problem arises. When we connect the spectator and plurality, we tend to be pre-occupied with the implication of spectator as beholder, seer, out-looker and watcher which emphasize the supremacy of eyes as the old metaphor of the window of the soul in philosophical tradition. Consequently, as Arendt realized, the importance of other sense organs is overshadowed. But somehow, she still used 'spectator' in the metaphor of stage-settings, in which human beings are both actors and spectators. It seems that in this implicit process of elevating human existence to the transcendental nowhere of the world, Arendt is more or less introducing the world only as a background in that her notions of the space of appearance and the public realm would suffice to support the main structure of her political theory. I therefore propose that we shift our focus not to the spectator-actor relationship, but to human existence as a bridge which links the sensible and the supersensible. In the following paragraphs, I shall demonstrate how Arendt used metaphor to name the ineffable.

Ben Berger attempted to address the presentability of human in Arendt through metaphors. Berger realized that a dichotomous pattern of concepts and

metaphors is equally important for offering literal and figurative interpretations of Arendt's "idiosyncratic understanding of politics" and "more sensational claims". Berger drew out the lesser-known patterns from both literal concepts and figurative metaphors, such as "plurality and isolation, visibility and invisibility, light and darkness, shining glory and shadowy pariahdom, immortality and oblivion". Although it has inevitable flaws, this structural pattern helps to create subtler points rather than being a simplistic, clear-cut, reversal statement.¹⁸⁰

The Greek notion of metaphORIZING indicates the human capacity of handing over (*meta-pherein*) the perceivably ineffable to the visible. Thinking through metaphor is a unique human capability to translate or carry over the ineffable into what is cognitively sensible, such as the visible and perceivable (LM, I 103).¹⁸¹ Metaphor enables us to carry over our sensory experiences and links the sensory with the non-sensory. Thus "there are not two worlds because metaphor unites them" (LM, I: 110).

In particular, access to being begins with the authentic anxiety through nothingness: human beings are the most mysterious beings which come from nowhere and end up as nothing which, as Heidegger suggests, is not no-thing, but the very possibility of being human, in this sense, as death and the ineffable. Nevertheless, Arendt's use of metaphor seems to serve a straightforward methodological purpose: namely, to explain the faculty of thinking by using metaphor to form a bridge between the invisible and the visible.¹⁸² That is, metaphor is used to create "its own 'concepts' out of the visible, to designate the invisible" (DTB, 728).

A recurring metaphor in Arendt's work is that of an oasis in the desert.

¹⁸⁰ For instance, Arendt "associates 'the social', marginalization, enslavement, and totalitarian domination with the concepts and metaphors of isolation, darkness, invisibility, bodily needs, and the eternal nothingness of oblivion." BERGER, B. 2009. Out of Darkness, Light. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 8, 157-182. 159.

¹⁸¹ "The metaphor achieves the 'carrying over' – *metapherein* – of a genuine and seemingly impossible *metabasis eis allo genos*, the transition from one existential state, that of thinking, to another, that of being an appearance among appearances, and this can be done only by analogies."

¹⁸² See Section 12-13 in *The Life of the Mind*

Typically, in the metaphor we catch a glimpse of the transcendent: the desert describes the modern growth of wordlessness as the withering away of the in-between; but within the desert, art and philosophy, love and friendship – the tenacious yet fragile qualities of humankind – comprise the life-giving and life-sustaining oases (pp, 201-04; Chapters 2 and 3). In view of this, we could plausibly maintain that Arendt attempted to use the question of no-bodyness as the existential ground, a horizon of being human.¹⁸³ After all, nihilism resided not only in the death of a metaphysical transcendental God, but also in the weariness of a world which we can become tired of and distant from.

Carrying over as a human capacity therefore characterises human beings as 1) spectators or recipients “receiving appearance through sense organs”, 2) appearing beings “displaying themselves” through human activities and 3) thinking beings withdrawing into the invisible. Thus, human beings are constantly transforming and translating “natural and unavoidable” (in Kant’s words) yet ineffable experiences into language, with analogies and metaphors. Metaphors achieve the “‘carrying over’ (*metapherein*) of a given world of a genuine and seemingly impossible ... a translation from one existential state ... to another, that of being an appearance among appearances” (LM, I: 103).

To some degree, metaphor transcends by addressing the issue when language fails us in expressing appearances outside “metaphysical assumptions and prejudices” (LM, I 30). In this regard, in order “to ‘hand over’, we must free ourselves from the technical interpretation of thinking” (LH, 218). For Heidegger, language provided such an entrance; for Arendt, I believe, human existence itself is the passage of those entries.

On the other hand, as a poetic tool, metaphor forms a bridge between the “*minor* truth of the seen” and the “*major* truth of the unseen” (LM, I 196).¹⁸⁴ The

¹⁸³ We should not be surprised that, right after the metaphor of the oases and desert, in *The Promise of Politics*, Arendt urged her readers to consider an anti-nihilistic question: “*Why is there anybody at all and not rather nobody?*”

¹⁸⁴ Arendt quoted from Ernest Fenollosa and commented that even this is a metaphor indicating the iceberg of human knowledge.

metaphorical transition can be achieved only by the human capacity to carry over “one existential state” into another. Metaphors are thoughts fragments which Arendt used to quote from texts randomly and linger on in order to prevent theorizing and interrupting the irresistible flow of “transcendental force” (MDT, 153-206).

In particular, “what connects thinking and poetry is metaphor” according to Arendt. For “thinking creates its ‘concept’ out of the visible, in order to designate the visible” (DTB, 728). What is invisible and intangible is not identical with what is transcendental, although this is similar with the fact that the thinking faculty and the thinking act are different. The only adequate metaphor for thinking activity is the “pure sensation of being alive”; then thinking is an unanswerable question now that living itself begets aims, purposes and meanings (LM, I 197). So although she does not ask for either causes or purposes about “What makes us think?; she does limit the scope of inquiry and challenges the taken-for-granted assumption that the thinking act is like flute-playing (yes, a metaphor); it is intangible and untraceable. The need for thinking is coeval with the appearance of man on earth; and thinking in metaphor is only possible for human beings with sense organs and sensory experiences (LM, I: 129).

To seek proof of the invisible world by metaphors, the sense experiences of vision are usually applied to attest the essence of the world of appearances. We could become blind among the invisible and untraceable (LM, I: 105).¹⁸⁵ According to Arendt, the sole purpose of metaphors, like analogies and emblems, is that they are “threads by which the mind holds on to the world even when, absentmindedly, it has lost *direct* contact with it”. Metaphors “guarantee the unity of human experience” because they “serve as models to give us bearings lest we stagger blindly among experiences” (LM, I: 109). Vision is to the eyes and sight is the “guiding metaphor and model for the thinking mind”. Thus “distance is the

¹⁸⁵ “The metaphor, bridging the abyss between inward and invisible mental activities and the world of appearance, was certainly the greatest gift language could bestow on thinking and hence on philosophy, but the metaphor itself is poetic rather than philosophical in origin.”

most basic condition for the functioning of vision”, and this is particularly the case in traditional metaphysics, which secures a safe distance between subject and object (LM, I: 111). In this case, for Arendt, by seeing to the things themselves, metaphors not only nullify the metaphysical two-world theory by uniting them, but also testify that, in another way of saying, truth is “ineffable by definition”, understood in the metaphysical tradition in terms of the sight metaphor (LM, I: 119). That is to say, the ability of the human mind to detect the non-apparent through analogies, metaphor and emblems is a kind of proof that mind and body, the invisible and the visible, are made for each other.

Arendt, however, warned us to be cautious when using metaphor. That is, to understand whether it is safe to use appropriate metaphors if we do not claim a demonstrable truth. Unfortunately, it is not. The enterprise of theorizing some unknown territory by using metaphors which are indemonstrable is compelling yet dangerous. For instance, the iceberg metaphor in psychoanalysis, which Arendt called a “pseudo-science”, is used to indicate and describe some unseen and untestable area called ‘unconsciousness’ or ‘sub-consciousness’. This is unobjectionable (112). Such a speculation presupposes a mental structure which is only feasible and certifiable as a scientific theory (LM, I: 113).

In short, what does transcendence mean in terms of Arendt’s conception of the human? There are three points to be clarified. First, transcendence in political theory does not designate a higher position beyond human affairs, a looking-down perspective. Rather transcendence in politics designates an immanent capacity to be human at all, from which we can address the problem of rootless authority, an illegitimate founding moment or human capacity as a free gift from nowhere. Second, transcendence in human being not only designates the never-ending, existential-ontological pursuit of immortality, greatness or beauty, allegedly the realm of god. But also transcendence names the human capacity to carry over and translate the ineffable innately into the world of appearances. Third, transcendence addresses the ineffableness of human existence, such as the intricacy of emotions, feelings and sensations, categories which can be linked to the Kantian transcendental aesthetic judgment. More importantly, transcendence designates the oasis of love and friendship, art and philosophy, the area of

tenderness but life-sustaining and the area which politics can present and protect.

Conclusion

To summarize, although I use the term 'transcendental' throughout the thesis, I recognize that there are multiple ways of interpreting transcendence and transcending in Arendtian political theory. In particular, I examine Arendt's conception of transcendence by considering it in relation to the ineffable and I show the existential ground of transcendence: human beings themselves, who are carriers or passages toward the perceivably ineffable. In this chapter, I have discussed that, for Arendt, modern human beings are disempowered, under the yoke of metaphysics and technology, in terms of naming the ineffable.

By following Heidegger's retrieval of the original essence of metaphysics and his effort with hermeneutic phenomenology as a human access or transcendence to the ineffable, I have presented the impenetrability of the realm as the meta dimension of human being. 'Meta' has a double sense, as 1) the transcendental (meta-*phusika*) dimension of human being, and 2) the ability to hand over (meta-*pherein*) the ineffable to the visible and perceivable. In view of this, to be human is a political imperative in Arendt: "Be human, please!" might not be just a colloquial injunction occurring in everyday conversation, but more importantly might be recognized as a political imperative which underlines Arendt's *oeuvre*. So we have to restore the meaning and meaningfulness of being human in the first place. Only in this way can we talk about bringing back the awareness, dignity, even pride in being human.

We also flip around the chilling anti-nihilistic question 'Why is there anybody rather than nobody?' which does not simply address the quasi-existential crisis of how the human species is threatened by unstoppable technological development. Rather, the question agitates and responds to the fearsome scenario of the modern loss of being human: we are gradually losing sight of the existential ground upon which we acquire the affirmation of being human and only human. In this case, the question about no-bodyness is meaningful and necessary as a firm existential ground, a hermeneutic horizon, a borderline

question, if we are to establish a relationship with the world (LM, I: 200-2).

In view of this, In the next chapter, from the existential horizon of the noun 'world', I shall seek to disclose and explore how human existence is capable of transcending through the invented verb 'to world' to arrive at to be human is 'to world'. I shall name the ineffable as a creation, combining it with building and caring to constitute three phases of worlding. I shall therefore investigate the primordially and specifically human capacities of building and caring for the world: the capacity 'to world.'

3 Building and Caring: The Human Capacity to World

The era of Big Data is fundamentally changing our way of existence as well as our self-perception as human beings. Digital traces, one of the influential yet less-known by-products of the labouring consumer society led by data technology are created, catalogued, processed, analysed and interpreted because of the way that we rely on digital devices to live in the modern world.¹⁸⁶ Digital traces do not, however, reveal ‘who’ we are but only create uni-dimensional, fragmented and biased virtual images.¹⁸⁷ Actually, the more traces are relevant to biological life itself, the more fixed and final our images will become. Although these virtual images might be praised as the finest achievement of our time to mark scientific and technological success, they can also become the crime which we commit not only on ourselves but also on future generations. The real danger is that the relentless data analysis might threaten to reduce the rich and profound human language into simplified machine language and, in turn, change the way in which we use language to interpret and understand ourselves and our relationship with the world. Perhaps, one day in the future, human beings will strive to destroy these images and traces just to fight for a more fundamental and authentic existence.¹⁸⁸ If that day comes, with numbed senses, human beings would lose the world as it continues to fade away as an ever-receding horizon on the earth.

With a touch of sarcasm, Arendt foresaw a similar situation in the modern

¹⁸⁶ As is repeatedly emphasized, without those devices, life would become miserable and even impossible in the modern world.

¹⁸⁷ One can leave digital traces by simply visiting a website, sending an e-mail, paying by phone, or ordering a delivery. The traces are collected and submitted to data analysis and visualization for various purposes. For instance, from the technological perspective, people’s physical or psychological indices, social networks, family status and career trajectory are descriptively analysed and interpreted.

¹⁸⁸ But this would become another story or even tragedy which we might not live to see.

labouring and consuming society. She said that human dignity, an “indispensable element of human pride” in terms of greatness and importance makes us believe that ‘who’ somebody is must transcend ‘what’ “he can do and produce”,¹⁸⁹ but that vulgar competition with what we have done is “sheer stupid vanity” (HC, 211).¹⁹⁰ Consequently, Arendt warned us not to fall into the trap of the modern pathos of rescuing human dignity from its product (HC, 210-211). It is in this light that I shall further investigate the notion of transcendence in terms of the concept of world.

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated the possibility of working out a transcendental (meta)-dimension in Arendt’s account of the human in the light of Heidegger’s philosophy. Although Arendt used the term in several different contexts, I want to reaffirm that, based on my Heideggerian interpretation of Arendt, transcendence is in no way meant to refer to ontological absoluteness or theological divinity. Instead, I follow a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective on the world to examine how human existence bridges the sensible and the supersensible; the latter used to be derived from and belonged to the realm of the metaphysical mystical. In this regard, I borrow the term ‘horizon’ – the central term of hermeneutic phenomenology – to designate a cognitive boundary line upon which human existence, as transgressor and translator, transcends toward the unknown and ineffable.¹⁹¹

In this chapter, in order to further explore why and how human as transcending being was the priority of politics for Arendt, I shall consider two claims regarding the human capacity for transcendence. First the political claim:

¹⁸⁹ Here, ‘transcend’ designates the old impression of a categorical and hierarchical order, namely, beyond some lower existence.

¹⁹⁰ “Only the vulgar will *transcend* to derive their pride from what they have done; they will, by this *condescension*, become the ‘slaves and prisoners’ of their own faculties and find out, should anything more be left in them than *sheer stupid vanity*, that to be one’s own slave and prisoner is no less bitter and perhaps even more shameful than to be the servant to somebody else.”

¹⁹¹ See KLUN, B. 2018. Horizon, Transcendence, and Correlation: Some Phenomenological Considerations. *Journal for Cultural & Religious Theory*, 17, 354-366. Husserl designated a ‘horizon’ of intentionality with a transcendental role, as *a priori* to phenomenon. Klun commented that “Horizon is transcendent with regard to that which appears (a phenomenon) within it, and so it is *prior* to the phenomenon, something that ensures the horizon’s *a priori* and transcendental status” (p. 353).

what is it about human existence that makes it capable of transcending its own limited biological sojourn on earth? Second, the ontological claim: why and how does world, using Heidegger's word, name the transcendence which makes human existence "different from all other entities", the "disclosedness of beings" and at the same time, the "openness of Being?" (BW, 141).

For Heidegger, what transcends is the being of human existence itself. In the hermeneutic phenomenological reading, everything that *is* must appear, and everything that appears must appear to me - the carrier of space (sense organs) as well as time (natality and mortality). In other words, how the world appears to me can be concentrated into a transcendental moment in which I decide how things appear, as beautiful or ugly, *to me* (HC, 173).¹⁹² We must therefore investigate Arendt's phenomenology of the world as it is the theoretical basis for her political theory. For her, the primacy of appearances for all living beings, common to human and animal, are not mere appearances, but manifest the urge toward self-display. Thus, in the world of appearing and disappearing, a relative transcendence into immortality is needed for politics. In other words, politics needs a degree of permanence beyond the limited life span of individual human beings, to welcome newcomers and bid farewell to the deceased. Furthermore, the durable world is only meaningful in so much as it is presentable within human existence, for the world can be saved from the natural ruin of time only because the space of appearances can "absorb and make shine" and leave human traces behind. In short, I look to the notion of transcending as the world-building capacity of human beings. In this context, the two claims regarding the human capacity for transcendence coincide: the ontological determination of the transcendental dimension of human existence is presentable only by securing a relatively stable world protected by political

¹⁹² "Everything that is, must appear, and nothing can appear without a shape of its own; hence there is in fact no thing that does not in some way *transcend* its functional use, and its *transcendence*, its beauty or ugliness, is identical with appearing publicly and being seen. By the same token, namely, in its sheer worldly existence, everything also *transcends* the sphere of pure instrumentality once it is completed. The standard by which a thing's excellence is judged is never mere usefulness ... but its adequacy or inadequacy to what it should *look like*."

commitment.

In this chapter, I shall further elaborate the transcendental human capacity of worlding, which was described in terms of naming in Chapter 2, as establishing a relationship with things for the first time through speaking with language, words, concepts, ideas and metaphors. In this chapter, I shall describe two further intrinsic human capacities of worlding: building and caring. 'Building' is accomplished through labour and work by bridging the intangible and the tangible, and erecting a world upon the earth. 'Caring' is maintaining and preserving what has been built through action, speech, loving, remembering and augmenting; labour and work are, of course, indispensable for caring. As explained above, naming, building and caring are three different aspects of the human capacity for worlding; they are closely intertwined and inseparable for us to be human. They are possible only because human beings are carriers of time: human being is time and time is human being. In view of this, the modern problem of the world becomes the problem of the human. That is, the loss of the human is the loss of the capacity to world.

In view of this, in the first section, I shall turn to Heidegger's influential text, *The Origin of the Work of Art* and try to explain why he treated 'world' as both a noun and a verb. On the one hand, as a noun, 'world' is taken for granted as something universally valid. Similar to the word 'being', we use 'world' unconsciously without thinking too much about its meaning. For Heidegger, 'world' as a noun discloses the relationality of human existence: human beings are related to things and to others which constitute the relational whole. Following Husserl, Heidegger used the term *umwelt* to designate the familiar, safe and secure environmental world which human beings are born into and depart from. On the other hand, *es weltet* ("it worlds"), strikes us as an idiosyncratic invented verb which focuses on the temporality of human existence. Temporality here refers particularly to Dasein's time or the constitutive human experience of time, as opposed to the technical time determined by precision and calculation. For instance, how I experience 'time' differs with different activities; one hour of labouring in the field and another

enjoying an afternoon tea in the garden give different intuitive experiences. In the KNS lecture courses, Heidegger found nothing of an 'I' in particular, but only "an 'ex-perience (*er-leben*) of something" as "living toward something".¹⁹³ In view of this, if *umwelt* designates the spatial environing world, then *es weltet* adds a temporal dimension which underscores the dynamic world-building capacity of human existence. In this section, I shall therefore introduce Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation of the world in terms of his two key terms: *umwelt* and *es weltet*.

In the second section, I shall reinterpret Arendt's concern about the modern loss of the world and dehumanizing social conditions in terms of the dynamic temporal dimension of the world to which Heidegger's concept of *es weltet* draws our attention. To clarify this, I shall show how the modern world, in a labouring and consuming society, has been reified, alienated and lost. This clarification is necessary because two essential transcendental characteristics of the world – durability and presentability – have been compromised in the labouring and consuming society. Correspondingly, the world is at a loss due to a fading horizon and numbing senses. Indeed, both durability and presentability provide a structural basis to support Arendt's phenomenological interpretation of a world as an existential horizon toward which human beings transcend. So seen from the pre-philosophical or hermeneutic phenomenological perspective, a reinterpretation of 'world' as a verb becomes necessary.

In the third section, I shall further investigate how *es weltet* is an intrinsic ontological and existential concept for Arendt by reinterpreting labour and work as world-building human capacities. First, as the capacity for life, labour seeks to "transcend and to be alienated" from the life process itself (HC, 120-121). I show this by exploring three levels of lived experiences through labour – pain, happiness and vitality. All three are relatively ineffable, incommunicable and

¹⁹³ HEIDEGGER, M. 2002. *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, trans. SADLER, T., Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

transcendental experiences. Second, I demonstrate how the work of art secures a durable and presentable world. Echoing Heidegger's sophisticated analysis of the origin of the work of art, Arendt indicated that being part and parcel of human nature, as the human condition of work, worldliness is designated to be "the capacity to fabricate and create a world" (CC, 206).

In the final section, I shall discuss action as caring for the established world as one phase of worlding— the political capacity to world *par excellence*. For Arendt, action is ontologically rooted in natality, "the birth of new men and the new beginning" and "the action they [human beings] are capable of by virtue of being born" (HC, 247). The relevant point is that we occasionally engage in our everyday experiences in the world which involves a degree of entertaining some "implicit self-understanding" of the dynamic movement in the world.¹⁹⁴ Action, as the tremendous political capacity for words and deeds, can translate and transform the intangible and insert it into a world of appearances, to create a web of relationships, and to deal with human affairs. All those human activities which Arendt described as characteristically 'worldly' are, in fact, transcendental.

3.1 Worlding: from *Umwelt* to *Es weltet*

To develop a concept devoid of arbitrary preconceptions about what it means to be human, Heidegger offered a hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation of the world. Worlding does not merely indicate the transcendental need to be; it also captures the transcendental capacity to fabricate and create a world upon the earth. Worlding describes the human capacity to build and sustain a world which can withstand the consumption of the life process and outlast the dwelling places which we build to inhabit and to accommodate ourselves. In this section, I shall demonstrate how Heidegger

¹⁹⁴ LOIDOLT, S. 2018. *Phenomenology of plurality: Hannah Arendt on political intersubjectivity*, New York, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. p. 84.

draws attention to and distributes the characteristics of the relationality and temporality of human existence in terms of *umwelt* and *es weltet*.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the major task for Heidegger early in his career was to uncover the tradition within which the concept of the world is most ambiguous yet significant. Traditionally, the epistemological problem of the validity of knowing and grasping the external world has become the central task for philosophers. Descartes's metaphysical world as *res extensa* is the basis of the ontological tradition and the vehicle of the traditional epistemology. Extension – in terms of length, breadth and thickness – makes up the real Being of the corporeal substance which we call 'world'. Descartes distinguished the *ego cogito* from the *res corporea* based on ontological foundations, and corporeal things with particular properties such as hardness, weight and colour can change by being divided, shaped or moved. But substance, as the ontological foundation of corporal things, designates the unmovable, unchangeable and constant being. Descartes's world is always reified as an objective world against the conscious subject. The epistemological underpinning in Descartes's thinking leads to a natural philosophy which still clings to the traditional understanding of the world: an object of mathematics and physics, from cosmology to cardiology to the psycho-physiology of perception.¹⁹⁵ Descartes believed that there is no way for men to grasp direct knowledge of the world as it is in itself; what we think we know about the world is only a sort of mental representation which we make of it. Therefore, *cogito ergo sum* was a metaphysical bridge built by Descartes to link consciousness back to the world.¹⁹⁶ Like the Cartesian coordinate system which sets up a reference point to enable us to identify a point in a space by numbers; the *cogito* (I think) is the only legitimate testimony of our own being with the external

¹⁹⁵ DESCARTES, R. & GAUKROGER, S. 1998. *Descartes: The World and Other Writings*, Cambridge University Press. *The World (Le Monde)* was an ambitious project which never appeared in Descartes's lifetime.

¹⁹⁶ In French: *Je pense, donc je suis*; 'I think, therefore I am'.

world.¹⁹⁷

According to Heidegger, although Descartes investigated the *cogito* of the ego, he left the *sum* completely undiscussed: those proximally ready-to-hand entities were passed over. So epistemology did not stand as a true problem for Heidegger because every problem is set up as a problem based on an assumption of distinction between subject and object.¹⁹⁸ The real problem, however, is the question of being, *seinsfrage*. In this regard, as discussed in section 1.3, Heidegger accepts and develops the implication of Husserl's emphasis on the ontological dignity of the human world as opposed to the world reshaped or reconstructed by scientific observers. Based on this distinction, Heidegger offered, from a different point of view, a hermeneutical-phenomenological study of world. For the ontological-metaphysical sense of the world has been passed over by tradition.

Heidegger determined to take a leap away from the obscure and the opaque where everything is "destructured, undifferentiated and indeterminate" and turned to the "thick of the articulated whole of life absorbed with things in the enviring world".¹⁹⁹ As an articulated whole, the transcendental world is something towards which Dasein transcends. Here the transcendent is a supersensible being or the highest being.²⁰⁰

Just because the significance of human experience as "an 'ex-perience (*er-leben*) of something" as "living toward something",²⁰¹ this 'something' is the world. For Heidegger, there was no such thing as *my* world or *our* world if this

¹⁹⁷ For Descartes, to acquire access to the world one can only achieve this through mathematics. Descartes narrowed down the question of the world to that of Things of Nature, with value-predicate or value-characters. But the Thing-ontology is not accidental, not an oversight it would be simple to correct, but that it is grounded in a kind of Being of Dasein.

¹⁹⁸ Therefore, Heidegger raised strong doubt on the question of the external reality which Descartes presupposed as *the* problem of epistemology, which entails other presuppositions. This means the genuine solution to Cartesian doubt "consists in the insight that this is no problem at all". Heidegger, *Toward*, p. 77.

¹⁹⁹ KISIEL, T. 1995. *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*, University of California Press.

²⁰⁰ Heidegger, *Wegmarken*, 180; *Pathmarks*, 266.

²⁰¹ HEIDEGGER, M. 2002. *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, trans. SADLER, T., Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

my world or *our* world names and experiences an exclusively self-centred, self-sufficient and self-interested conscious subjectivity. Individualism is the *my*-world mentality. Both Husserl and Sartre followed Descartes by beginning with *my* world and then trying to explain how an isolated subject can give meaning to other human beings and to the shared intersubjective world. But for Heidegger, *the* world was always prior to any *my* world.²⁰² Heidegger analysed the experience of, for instance, seeing the lectern as something given to me, rather than which I acquire or live the experience of, as indicated by the meaning of 'there is' (*es gibt*) as 'it gives'. For instance, the experience of seeing the lectern is given to me *out* of an immediate environment (*umwelt*). This *umwelt* consists of lectern, books, blackboard, notebooks, student fraternity, pen, tram car and so on. Even so, it does not just consist of things which are then conveniently conceived as meaning this or that. Rather "the meaningful is primarily and immediately *given* to me without any mental detours across thing-oriented apprehension".²⁰³ *Umwelt* describes a situation in which a human being is living in an *umwelt* where anything has the character of world. It is everywhere the case that 'it worlds' (*es weltet*) rather than 'it measures' or 'it values' (*es wertet*).²⁰⁴

Es weltet therefore means 'it worlds' or 'it contextualizes'. The world worlds itself as the thinking thinks itself. This is the gist of Heidegger's hermeneutics. Heidegger uses *es*, 'it', the German neutral impersonal pronoun, to distance himself from both Descartes's and Husserl's philosophies, whereas the personal 'I' is intimately involved in this impersonal process, "encompassed by this meaning-giving context called the world".²⁰⁵ By way of pointing and outlining (schematizing), the expression *es weltet* realizes what Heidegger

²⁰² DREYFUS, H. L. 1991. *Being-in-the-World: A commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*, MIT Press.

²⁰³ HEIDEGGER, M. 2002. *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, trans. SADLER, T., Bloomsbury Publishing PLC. p.61.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ KISIEL, T. 1995. *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*, University of California Press.

wants by using language as a “formal indication”. *It* is identical with *I*. *It* is *I* myself, and not just any *I*, nor an ‘anything whatsoever’, nor a theoretical subject, but my ‘*I*’ which “goes beyond itself and resonates *with* this seeing”.²⁰⁶ Heidegger explicitly said in the lecture course that the “anything whatsoever” does not ‘world’, and the theoretical subject belongs to the category of isolated experience.²⁰⁷

Es weltet was Heidegger’s experimental leap from the lifeworld which Husserl depicted to the environmental experience; it also is a primal leap from a theoretical intentionality of subject-object to a more intimately involved worldly lived experience. It is my own *I* which is immersed deeply in the world in total absorption. I literally and emphatically ‘live through’ it, *er-lebe* es. This historical ‘*I*’ worlds eventfully. *Es ereignet sich*. With this double impersonal es, Heidegger in fact has named his lifelong topic, a theoretical and pre-worldly “primal something” (*ur-sprung*).²⁰⁸

Eight years after the KNS, in *Being and Time* Heidegger took a systematically shift by substituting the epistemological questions with ontological questions. Instead of placing the human into the subject-object (or knower-known relationship), Heidegger determined to reveal what kind of *being* human beings are.²⁰⁹ However, he warned explicitly against thinking of Dasein as a Husserlian meaning-giving transcendental subject.²¹⁰

Heidegger used the term ‘being-in-the-world’ as a basis on which to ground his profound critique of traditional ontology and epistemology, to analyse the structure of Dasein. For Heidegger, as a development of *umwelt*, being-in-the-

²⁰⁶ Heidegger, *Toward*.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.* p. 62. “*More precisely*: only through the accord of this particular ‘*I*’ does it experience something environmental, where we can say ‘it worlds’. Wherever and whenever ‘it worlds’ for me, *I* am somehow there.”

²⁰⁸ Kisiel, *The Genesis*.

²⁰⁹ There are two modes of being: human being and non-human being. Apart from Dasein, Heidegger’s terminology refers to human being as being human and the non-human being divides into two categories: *Zuhandensein* and *Vorhandensein*, translated as ‘ready-to-hand’ and ‘present-at-hand’.

²¹⁰ DREYFUS, H. L. 1991. *Being-in-the-World: A commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time, Division I*, MIT Press.

world meant “the structural whole of significant relationships that Dasein experiences – with tools, things of nature, and other human beings”. Heidegger’s exposition of the necessity, the structure and priority of the question of the meaning of Being, in fact, lies in an inquiry and proper explication of an entity he denoted by the term ‘Dasein’ which is the only entity that has the possibility of asking questions about its own Being: “Being is always being of an entity”. And entities can become areas for specific subject-matter which later serve as objects of scientific investigation, for instance, history, nature, space, life, Dasein and language. In this, Heidegger distanced himself from the scientific studies of man and moved towards questions such as how can Dasein comport itself in one way or another. Heidegger called this comportment of Dasein ‘existence’ (*Existenz*). Dasein always understands itself in terms of its existence: to be itself or not itself.

Heidegger listed the categorical and existential ways in which the term ‘world’ is used.²¹¹ Through this sort of world-building, we establish our own being. Only man can ‘have’ a world, but Heidegger did not use the word ‘have’ to thingify or indicate a subject-object relation. For Heidegger, ‘world’ can also stand for, but not be limited to, “the ‘public’ we-world, or one’s own closest (domestic) environment” (BT, 93).²¹² Dasein understands itself by mapping, interpreting, demarcating the *welt*, especially the *umwelt*. Through Dasein, the world unfolds in a particular way as our senses comprehend it. Actually, Heidegger thought that the public is a common environment accessible to everyone; everyone shares but does not own or have that world (BT, 84). The enviroing nature (*die Umweltnatur*), the roads, streets, bridges, all become visible and accessible to ‘us’ and point to the direction where ‘we’ want them to be. In this way, Heidegger was trying to evade the traditional ontological terms

²¹¹ ‘World’ was a multi-meaningful concept for Heidegger and a very important one helping us to understand Arendt’s idea of world.

²¹² “Man’s having an environment (Umwelt). ‘Having’ is founded upon the Being-in, it can explicitly discover those entities which it encounters environmentally, it can know them, it can avail itself of them, it can have the ‘world.’”

which lure the reader into another Cartesian subjective conscious abyss (BT, 80).²¹³

Certainly, the establishment of human Dasein anticipates a configuration of world. For Heidegger, to depict what we see and give an account of the “phenomenon of the world” and those entities in it is always a pre-phenomenological business.²¹⁴ So “to give a phenomenological description of ‘the world’ will mean to exhibit the Being of those entities which are present-at-hand within the world, and to fix it in concepts which are categorical” (BT, 91). What we think we know about the world is always the entities, the world of Things: Things of Nature and Things ‘invested with value’ (*wertbehaftete Dinge*) such as houses, trees, people, mountains, stars. Our understanding of the world, however, is pre-ontological. The world we dwell in is the world of equipment, practices, social conventions and concerns in some domain without noticing them or trying to spell them out.

World is therefore the familiar horizon, the *umwelt*, which is already there before we are born and will be there after our death (OWA, 141). As Heidegger would later elaborate in his essay on *The Origin of the Work of Art*, it is through that work that we acquire a world: “To be a work means to set up a world”. What does this mean? What is it to be a world? For Heidegger, the answer can only be hinted at rather than explicitly defined. For example, like a temple-work, architecture with its path indicates that people must follow; a ‘thingly’ building erected on earth and protected by the world indicates the human forces and intelligence; a statue indicates and represents a tragedy at a holy festival. The

²¹³ The departure from tradition fundamentally is how Heidegger exposit spatial ‘eing-in’ in an existential compartment of Dasein’s Being. Contrary to the normal and familiar sense of spatiality, Heidegger explained that this indicative ‘in’ is derived from *innan*: ‘to reside’ or ‘to dwell’, that ‘I am’ (*Ich bin*) means that ‘I reside in’ or ‘dwell alongside’ the world. And Being (*Sein*, as in *Ich bin*) signifies to ‘to be familiar with ...’, and this ‘being alongside’ the world “in the sense of being absorbed in the world is an *existential* founded upon Being-in” (BT, 80). Being-in does not mean the Aristotelian sense of space, that we are beings, like contents which fill in an empty space, as if we are cargoes or things in a container. No. Being-in is that Dasein’s Being takes care, dwells in the world; is Being alongside the world; is being absorbed in the world. Then he concludes that, “Being-in’ is thus the formal existential expression for the Being of Dasein, which has Being-in-the-world as its essential state.”

²¹⁴ Such description is always confined to entities.

nature of the world can only be indicated and this indication can effectively prevent us having a distorted view of the world. Therefore, Heidegger maintained that:

The world is not the mere collection of the countable and uncountable, familiar and unfamiliar things that are just there. But neither is it a merely imagined framework added by our representation to the sum of such given things ... World is the ever-nonobjective to which we are subject as long as the paths of birth and death, blessing and curse keep us transported into Being. Whenever those decisions of our history that relate to our very being are made, are taken up and abandoned by us, go unrecognized and are rediscovered by new inquiry, there the world worlds. (OWA, 170)

Just because the world can never stand before us as an object, it is more fully in being than the phenomenal world – “the tangible and perceptible realm”. It seems that the expression ‘world worlds’ indicates that the world can world even in the absence of human consciousness because the ever-nonobjective world secures the ground for everything which is countable and uncountable, familiar and unfamiliar. It is just there in itself.²¹⁵ Such is the usual interpretation. However, only human beings are capable of building a world. The hiding peasant woman depicted in Van Gogh’s painting *Shoe*, on the other hand, “has a world because she dwells in the overtness of beings, of the things that are” (170). This indicates that at least human beings are equipped with the capacity to build a world. The question that matters is how to acquire or set up a world. For Heidegger, it is through *work*.

“To be a work means to set up a world.” (OWA, 171). In this comment, Heidegger exclusively prioritized work, especially the work of art, in the formation of a world. What Heidegger meant is that the world worlds anyway, but he also indicated that the world cannot world without the trace of human being. For instance, the peasant woman only has a world because the work

²¹⁵ LIPPIT, A. M. 1994. Afterthoughts on the Animal World. *MLN*, 109, 786-830.

and things which she dwelled alongside open up a world for her, by her hand of work, by her trace on earth, by her building up a living space. She does not create the world in its equipmental sense but by setting up and opening up a world by worlding, not enveloped by it but alongside it. In this world's worlding, there can be lingering and hastening, remoteness and nearness, scope and limits, all relatively related and connected only because human beings can measure them for their own purpose, and somewhat indicate and hint. It is not a simple distinction between artificial or man-made and the Greek sense of nature-earth, *phusis* because our perception of the world and human beings' dwelling is based on *phusis*, the emerging and rising in its own pattern, by season or by day/night. This dwelling is safe only when the *phusis* or the earth is protected by the setting up of the world, that is, by work.

The world is set up on the earth by Dasein simply living and dwelling in it without any subjective consciousness. Only the world brings shine and colour, the heaviness and the wholeness of the earth. Therefore, work is the symbol of the distinction between earth and world. The earth is self-dependent, effortless and untiring: "Upon the earth and in it, historical man grounds his dwelling in the world. In setting up a world, the work sets forth the earth" (OWA, 172). For Heidegger, the earth, by its very nature, was undisclosable; it closes off any attempt at penetrating into it, it resists any hands-on contact, it closes itself up from appearing. The stone's heaviness or 'weight's burden' was transformed by the act of weighing or balancing into a calculated number. Or colour shines as such; but when we analyse it by measuring its wavelength, the colour's shininess is gone. The earth shows itself only when it remains undisclosed and unexplained. Such is the earth in Heidegger's phenomenological concept of world: something which can be experienced but can hardly be articulated.

To sum up, I believe that Heidegger was working with two dimensions of world, relationality and temporality, in his own terminology, *umwelt*, designating the referential whole of relationality without which I would lose the horizon which tells me who I am. *Es waltet* manifests the gist of temporality, the human senses and human activities, regarding how human beings, generation by generation,

create the living environment through the capacity of worlding. That is, human existence is the parameter of how the world worlds. Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation of the world help us to understand what Arendt meant by dehumanization in the light of her observation of the modern loss of the world. I shall next try to develop two interrelated perspectives, the fading horizon and numbing senses, in order to further substantiate this indebtedness.

3.2 The modern loss of the world

In this section, I shall reconceptualize Arendt's concept of the world through the notion of transcendence into the modern loss of the world through hermeneutic phenomenological perspective which is tentatively characterized as a fading horizon and a numbing of the senses, which are two sides of the same coin in relation to human experiences of the ineffable. In other words, with numbing human senses, being part of the space of appearances, the horizon of the world – things which belong to the space of worldly appearances – is receding or fading away. In this regard, I tentatively differentiate two types of transcending in Arendt. First, transcendence as a noun refers to the durability and presentability of the world, and second, 'to transcend' as a verb is a distinctive human capacity to step over the cognitive limit set by metaphysics into the ineffably unknown and supersensible realm.

To reconceptualize the modern loss of the world through human experiences is significant²¹⁶ principally because Arendt's concept of the world is notoriously and characteristically vague²¹⁷ because she was trying to

²¹⁶ To be sure, such 'loss' not only describes a sentiment of loneliness and uprootedness captured as 'nowhere' in Chapter 1, but also a series of real political phenomena of loss of home and space of appearances, such as refugees as stateless people, the human condition in a labouring and consuming society, concentration camps, poverty and exile.

²¹⁷ Indeed, Arendt's thoughts were entangled with the confusing paradoxes, tensions, conundrums, contradictions, ambiguity and complexity, as if she refused to be categorized or classified. Also see HULL, M. B. 2003. *The Hidden Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, Taylor

articulate the invisible and intangible withering away of the public space as a space of appearances in-between, through her account of the modern world regarding particular historical social, political and technological changes.²¹⁸ However, as Sophie Loidolt pointed out, for Arendt, “the world is neither a genuinely political, nor sociological, nor psychological concept”.²¹⁹ Rather, the thickly multifaceted and multilayered notion of the world presents itself as a thematic concept which was rich in methodological as well as ethical implications for Arendt. As an operating concept, Loidolt drew attention to the fundamental ambiguity insofar as Arendt “deliberatively blurs the distinction between the public realm as a distinctive ‘space of appearance’ and appearance as a fundamental ontological concept”.²²⁰ The deliberate vagueness of Arendt’s account of the world creates an interpretive space for an intersubjective outlook.²²¹

Remarkably, modern life is “new, strange, discontinuous”, just as George

& Francis e-Library. pp. 1-3

²¹⁸ Such as Arendt’s account of world alienation and earth alienation, which Arendtian readers are familiar with, in terms of how the discovery of the telescope and moon launches, the discovery of America and the whole world, and the Reformation all caused the world to become unrecognizable and made human beings experience particular losses. See Arendt, Chapter 6 ‘The *Vita Activa* and the modern Age’, in *The Human Condition*, from p. 248.

²¹⁹ LOIDOLT, S. 2018. *Phenomenology of plurality: Hannah Arendt on political intersubjectivity*, New York, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. p. 93.

²²⁰ *ibid*, 93-94.

²²¹ Michael Janover (2011) realized that it was as if the world were a kind of talisman for Arendt; a signifying symbol for all which confers meaning to human existence. To prevent causing further distortion, Janover refused to give the world a determinate straightforward definition, such as an object of description which can be visually perceived. Alternatively, the world should be understood as an evocation, intonation or attunement which turned Arendt’s thought to a realm or reference which is never precisely captured by the description she did provide. JANOVER, M. 2011. Politics and Worldliness in the Thought of Hannah Arendt. *Action and appearance: Ethics and the politics of writing in Hannah Arendt*, 25-38. More subtly yet reasonably perceived, as Janover observed, the word ‘world’ is granted greater amplitude and plasticity either from Arendt’s deliberate attempt to melt together and play off “different ideas of activity (work, politics, thinking)” or “shades of value (meaningfulness, involvement of human plurality)” because she notoriously contributed to the linguistic vagueness or slippage to this concept. *Ibid*. Is it the same to think of the world poetically (in the sense of making/creating) and politically? Arguably, this poetic or politic understanding of the world seems rather odd when placed into her theory of action and other thinking.

Kateb understood what Arendt meant by 'world alienation' as 'loss' felt as the "spiritual condition of modernity".²²² Indeed, Arendt described both earth alienation and world alienation as corresponding in every respect to the major concerns of the modern loss of the world. As already stated, Arendt was not only appalled by the escapist fantasy of human beings,²²³ she described earth alienation – the hallmark of modern science – as a consequence of what happened to mother earth. She was also concerned about the political consequences which the development of modern science brings: the "shrinkage of the earth" and the "abolition of distance", as a result of, for example, the discovery of new lands, the invention of the telescope and Newton's discovery of gravity.

The problem as Arendt saw it was not the technical and scientific development *per se*, but rather "a political question of the first order".²²⁴ The world alienation is caused by the reversal of man's position: from lover to master or even maker of the subject world ever since man set foot in the bottomless and fathomless universe. World alienation manifests as, first, the loss of private property, second, the stability of the world being undermined, and third, the space-in-between becoming blurred. The loss of property is a deprivation of the "privately owned share of a common world" which is "the most elementary political condition for man's worldliness". Both expropriation and wealth accumulation contributed to the loss of man's worldliness (HC, 256). Consequently, no property means no private space which can guarantee man

²²² KATEB, G. 1983. *Hannah Arendt: Politics, Conscience, Evil*, UK, Martine Robertson & Company Ltd. "She finds in alienation not a specific horror, but a pervasive mentality that is often painful to endure and that is part of the direct or ultimate source of the specific horror of totalitarianism, and the source and also the intensified outcome of smaller wrongs and evils." pp.149-157.

²²³ With the first landing on the moon, the small step taken by a man was an "escape from men's imprisonment to the earth" and signified that the earth may no longer be the only habitation for human beings and it has been shrunk by the acceleration of speed.

²²⁴ In the last yet strange chapter 'The *Vita Activa* and the Modern Age' of *The Human Condition*, Arendt lamented that the intrinsic relationship of what technology has brought to the modern age and modern political conceptions and understanding.

a place in the world or a “shelter against the world”. The original four walls which protect the private sphere are broken and the intimacy and private life within them becomes exposed. This causes the blurring of the boundary between the private and the public realms, and the limited reality of the warmth of hearth or family life can never be replaced in the public sphere of a wider or fuller reality (HC, 58-59).²²⁵

It should be noted that this way of characterization is never new. For instance, Dana Villa illustrated Arendt’s understanding of the modern world as relatively “dimming down” the space of appearances and leading to the “loss of feeling for the world”.²²⁶ According to Villa, the notion of worldlessness represents a specific mode of modern anxiety, which not only means a loss of space, but also more abstractly manifests into two modes: existential and political. The existential anxiety describes a philosophical homesickness, the human experience of homelessness, a lack of place which results from the modern destruction of the durability of the human artifice. The political anxiety addresses not only the atrophy of the space of appearance and the withering of common sense, but also, more pertinently, a loss of feeling for the world because men are deprived of an appearing world which allows them to see and be seen.²²⁷

My approach to the modern loss of the world builds on Villa’s interpretation of ‘worldlessness’ in terms of the dimming down of the world as a space of appearances and humans’ loss of feeling for the world. As far as I am concerned, the world is noticed only when we bump into its loss, inconvenience or obtrusiveness, as I have repeatedly emphasized. The modern world has

²²⁵ Given the shifted focal point, the phenomenological emphasis on human experiences, I therefore reconceptualize Arendt’s perception of the world, in general as well as specifically, based on her diagnosis of earth alienation and world alienation into two characteristic features: numbing senses and a fading horizon.

²²⁶ In the light of Heidegger’s characterization of the world as openness and clearing.

²²⁷ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press.

become perishable and human beings are in danger of becoming nobody. To make sense of this rather evasive idea, I turn to Heidegger's interpretation of the world as something towards which human existence transcends through the ineffability of human experiences, which testifies to the relationality and temporality of the world.

Notably, the world as a practical horizon is widely discussed in Arendtian scholarship. For example, Michael D. Jackson believed that Arendt's political thought is inextricably tied to her immediate life experience, including political and social events, of her time, and he invoked the phenomenology of "the lifeworld and *lebensphilosophie* to explore the *social* spaces where thought arises and transpires".²²⁸ Benhabib employed Gadamer's method of interpretation, the "fusion of horizons", in her understanding of Arendt, trying to rebuild a conversation to recreate the whole meaningful horizon of the past from where she (Benhabib) came to solve the problem haunting the present.²²⁹ Both attempted to create a plausible explanation for Arendt's ambiguity by taking a detour through her life experiences to justify the methodology of phenomenology or hermeneutics.

An existential horizon which is anchored on the transcendental human capacity to world, however, has not been treated systematically, even though this rather philosophical perspective has a rich tradition of dealing with the two prominent phenomenological problems: the temporality of human existence and the phenomenal nature of the world. Arendt was always awed by the origin of philosophical wonder at transcendence derived from the existential fact of human existence as essentially limited, but "whose finitude is absolute".²³⁰ Even so, she refrained from a traditional impulse, such as an ontological pursuit

²²⁸ JACKSON, M. D. 2009. Where Thought Belongs: An Anthropological Critique of the Project of Philosophy. *Anthropological Theory*, 9, 235–251.

²²⁹ BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications.

²³⁰ The finitude originated from the fact that "man qua man has not created himself".

of substantial ground or divine infinity.²³¹ What fascinated her more was why such “an absolutely finite being *can* conceive of something infinite and call it ‘God’”. Or, what makes human existence “*capable of transcending* its own limitations, its absolute finitude?” (LM, II:128, italics by the current author).²³²

The world as a transcendental horizon, in Arendt’s phenomenology, is not unexplored territory. Sophie Loidolt showed how an approach to the basic human condition and activities entails “quasi-transcendental elements that work in an open, dynamic, and non-fundamental mode”.²³³ Loidolt’s understanding of transcendental is overshadowed by the ontological tradition. With a similar question in mind, Michael Gendre turned to Arendt’s phenomenological interpretation of human actions as the “vindication of transcendence” in order to show that “our capacity to initiate something new in the world” is “the capacity to transcend the merely given”.²³⁴ Gendre worked in the right direction by affirming human action as transcending capacity, but he ignored ‘world’ as “the essential mystery of human existence”.

As argued and articulated in Chapter 2, the meta dimension of human existence as the exclusive capacity to name the ineffable, that is to say, human existence itself, is the bridge linking the invisible and the visible. The world we live in is phenomenal in nature as the object of human experiences. Mariek Borren (2013) explained that Arendt’s notion of the world is a “meaningful context” within which human existence unfolds. As a meaningful context, the concept of the world is sought for meaning and a sense of belonging.²³⁵ Unlike

²³¹ The impulse is to deal with the question of how to derive “finitude from divine infinity or how to *ascend* from human finitude to divine infinity” (Willing, 128).

²³² The answer which Arendt provided was ‘willing’, which is not the subject of this chapter, but I would like to emulate it as a way of accessing the question with which I am about to deal.

²³³ LOIDOLT, S. 2018. *Phenomenology of plurality: Hannah Arendt on political intersubjectivity*, New York, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

²³⁴ GENDRE, M. 1992. Transcendence and Judgment in Arendt’s Phenomenology of Action. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 18, 29-50.

²³⁵ BORREN, M. 2013. ‘A Sense of the World’: Hannah Arendt’s Hermeneutic Phenomenology of Common Sense. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 21,

the ontological and epistemological dualism between subject and object, Borren proposed a neutral perspective: the intersubjectivity. That is, human being is shaping and being shaped by the world at the same time. In a similar vein, I designate the hermeneutic worldly horizon of human existence as the meaningful context or Heideggerian referential whole. The following discussion therefore presents two aspects of the modern loss of the world not from the traditional dualism between subject and object.

For the purpose of boosting economies and expanding power, the world is destroyed and reconstructed. The modern era is a time of consumption and a process of disassembling and recombining material from the factory, entering into and disposing of men's lives. For Arendt, the durability of the world was the pre-condition for politics but "the stability of the world is undermined in a constant process of change" (HC, 252).²³⁶ As a result, the space in-between, the *inter-est* which binds and relates human beings, is obliterated. The withering world of appearance is subsequent upon the rise of 'the social', which diminishes 'the political', especially when politics has degraded into an administration, a craft, a making or *techné*.²³⁷

The rise of society brought about the simultaneous decline of the public as well as the private realm. But the eclipse of a common public world, so crucial of the lonely mass man and so dangerous in the formation of the worldless mentality of modern ideological mass movements, began with the much more tangible loss of a privately-owned share in the world. (HC,

225-255. From a hermeneutic phenomenological viewpoint, Borren implicitly addressed this paradox and offered a plausible solution from another angle: the human faculty of judgment and common sense, as a channel or bridge which unites the world and the human.

²³⁶ The post-war German economic miracle is to be seen in an "outdated frame of reference" that is, the process of production and consumption which stimulates the economy, instead of ensuring the world's durability.

²³⁷ On a larger scale, the amplifying of the administrative function of government leads to a shrinkage of the public realm: "two hundred years of modernity ... could eventually predict and hope for the 'withering away' of the whole public realm" (HC, 60). Since Marx, government had transformed into a nationwide 'housekeeping,' thus, the public realm withers further (HC, 60).

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To be specific, it is the world-alienation of the modern age which has obliterated and confused the distinction between the public and the private spheres and darkened the world of appearance. Consequently there is nowhere to hide, to retreat to, and accordingly nowhere to shine and to be seen adequately.

It was in this context that Arendt called for a political transcendence in order to be at home in this world.²³⁸ Home is the environment which provides us with a sense of security, it is a familiar and relatively durable and permanent environmental world, like Heidegger's concept of *umwelt*, because the world is always the human world, which separates man from and shields him against nature. This is partly because this world is made of human artifices: bridges, buildings, fences, hospitals, schools. Without being at home in the durable space which makes things "fit for use and for erecting a world", without permanence which "stands in direct contrast to life", without transcendence, according to Arendt, "this life would never be human" (HC, 135). Moreover, the world "transcends our life-span into past and future alike" inasmuch as the world was already there and will always be there, regardless of each individual's "brief sojourn in it" (55).²³⁹ In other words, the world only matters when it out-lives everything that has a beginning and an end. For the world we commonly share is "what we enter when we are born and what we leave when we die" (55). As the compromise of worldly durability and presentability, the modern world is no longer capable of providing an existential horizon for human existence to transgress or transcend, as everything in the world has become unstable and

²³⁸ "If nature and the earth generally constitute the condition of human life, then the world and things of the world constitute the condition under which this specifically human life can be at home on earth" (HC, 134).

²³⁹ That is why Arendt believed that the public realm in the modern age is overshadowed by the "simultaneous loss of the metaphysical concern with eternity". Arendt seems to have left this problem of metaphysical transcendence to *vita comtemplativa* – her later philosophical work *The Life of the Mind*.

unpresentable.

First, in a labouring and consuming society, the world is no longer stable enough to provide a contextual horizon. Thus, with the atrophy of the space of appearances, “the stability of the world is undermined in a constant process of change” (HC, 252). As Arendt put it, the “central attitude” of the modern consumer society is the “attitude of consumption”, which “spells ruin to everything it touches” (CC, 208). Second, and more important, in a labouring and consuming society, the world is no longer presentable because of the numbing senses of its presenters, namely humans. What was “extraordinarily striking” for Arendt was the inward introspection, “the empty process of reckoning of the mind”, which has been mistaking the “senselessness of the urges of the body”, such as “appetites and desires”, for passion and what we usually deem unreasonable simply because we could not reason or reckon with the so-called ‘unreasonable.’ Consequently, the ineffability when we do our thinking has become “meaningless experience” and thought has become a mere “function of the brain” which can be easily replaced by machines (HC, 320-4). The reasons are not just a fading of a brightly beautiful canvas which highlights those lively yet transitory colours, but also the loss of spectators who can appreciate the beauty of the world.

So because of the fading horizon and numbing senses, the unstable and unpresentable modern world, in a sense, has lost its human. For Arendt, in the age of the victory of *animal laborans*, for one thing, the world has become “less stable, less permanent,” and thereby less reliable; for another, “all men and all human activities were equally submitted to ... survival of the animal species man”. More importantly, the loss of human through the loss of human experiences (HC, 321) witnesses the modern reversal of how mankind – not the individual self – has now begun to replace the *polis* (the nationally bound societies) to dominate the earth (HC 321),²⁴⁰ At the core of this reversal is the

²⁴⁰ In view of this, what was not needed in the process of life’s metabolism with nature was

old Christian assumption that “the human being and not the world is immortal” (HC 314).²⁴¹ This potential immortality is the eternal life of the species of mankind, rather than the immortality which depends on remembrance, which has a beginning and an end.

As a consequence, modern technology has twisted and created an illusion of human beings’ control and superiority over the world as if the world is disposable, temporary and transitional. This illusion is projected onto the canvas of the metaphysical conception of the world and its dichotomy with the self: “modern men were not thrown back upon this world but upon themselves” (HC, 254). In other words, modern men are threatened with flight away from the space of appearances, which is constitutive of its own being.

Arendt repeatedly emphasized the modern concern with the self, which is “an attempt to reduce all experiences with the world as well as with other human beings, to experiences between man and himself” because “the deepest motivation is worry and care about the self, instead of any care or enjoyment of the world” (HC, 254-7). For Arendt, the modern concern with the self is “an attempt to reduce all experiences, including with other human beings, to experiences between me and myself” (HC, 254).

Arendt traced the modern concern with the self to the Cartesian doubt about the reality of the world. On a cognitive level, the wonder of world reality has become the main epistemological problem which has haunted western philosophy.²⁴² Descartes’s solution was to look into the self, hence, the famous

counted superfluous or unnecessary. To the extent that all human peculiarity was effaced and rendered redundant in the world where man was labeled as jobholders. It is important to be aware of the different modes of immortality which Arendt was talking about: the individual, humankind as species, and human being, and the world (be it universe or *polis*).

²⁴¹ See BRIENT, E. 2000a. Hans Blumenberg and Hannah Arendt on the “Unworldly Worldliness” of the Modern Age. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 61, 513-530.

²⁴² Especially, for Arendt, it is the Cartesian doubt (the world reality) which led to a tradition which she called “world alienation”, the loss of a commonly experienced and shared world of action and speech in favour of a private world of introspection.

cogito ergo sum is understood as a causality of self-orientation within an actual world.²⁴³ For Arendt, however, the Cartesian solution was simply moving the Archimedean referent point into man himself, which is only logically plausible as far as “natural science was concerned” (HC, 280-9). Under a scientific gaze, the human being is confined “into the prison of his own mind, into the limitations of patterns he himself created” (288), as if the human is also part of the objective world which Descartes had in mind:²⁴⁴

When Descartes’ analytical geometry treated space and extension, the *res extensa* of nature and the world, so ‘that its relations, however complicated, must always be expressed in algebraic formulae’, mathematics succeeded in reducing and translating all that man is not into patterns which are identical with human, mental structures. (HC, 266)

Descartes’s concept of the world was based on his analytical geometry which treated the world merely as space and extension, the *res extensa*, and used algebraic formulae to capture, reduce and translate all which human is *not* into patterns. As a consequence, the subjectivity – the “adequate source of normative orientation” derived from the Cartesian doubt – has led to a tradition which Arendt called “world alienation”, the loss of a commonly experienced and shared world of action and speech in favour of the private world of introspection.²⁴⁵

In view of this, human beings are busy with labouring and consuming and are therefore not necessarily regarded as human beings but as *animal laborans* who relinquish their unique dignity (*dignitas* as a stance) and no longer stand on the borderline between the sensible and the supersensible worlds. In this

²⁴³ D'ENTRÈVES, M. P. 2002. *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, Routledge, BRIENT, E. 2000b. Hans Blumenberg and Hannah Arendt on the "Unworldly Worldliness" of the Modern Age. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 61, 513-530.

²⁴⁴ As a result, man can “risk himself into space and be certain that he would not encounter anything but himself, nothing that could not be reduced to patterns present in him.” (HC, 266)

²⁴⁵ D'ENTRÈVES, M. P. 2002. *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, Routledge. p. 20.

case, the world is no longer permanent and presentable because of the loss of the transcendental worldly horizon of human existence due to the fading horizon and numbing senses.

In other words, we are experiencing a numbing of the senses because we are losing sight of the worldly horizon and subsequently we lose ourselves by not trusting our own sense organs and perceptions. We no longer believe in intuition but rely on more 'convincing' scientific facts, technological means, iron logic and the dis-interested data which show people's economic behaviour. The problem occurs, however, when we allow science and modern technology to decide the way in which we perceive and present the world, and let machines do our thinking and speaking, and we are no longer fully human. We are just life itself: the "changeless eternal recurrence, the deathless everlastingness of the human as of all other animal species" (HC, 96-7). So what concerned Arendt was that, "[N]obody cares any longer what the world looks like", in the modern labouring and consuming society. This is the main reason, I believe, that Arendt in her later life comprehended the world in a much broader phenomenological sense as a "space in which one lives and which must look presentable" (EU, 25).²⁴⁶

Admittedly, as was discussed in sections 2.3 and 2.4, the world could be presentable only, as beautiful or ugly, to me. But when all I can think about is survival, hastily jumping into the supply chain of labouring and consuming, beauty and ugliness do not matter to me any more unless such an aesthetic appreciation is functional.²⁴⁷ By immersing into the self without establishing relationships with fellow human beings, human experiences are subsequently diminished and even virtualized in the digital technology era. This dire scenario

²⁴⁶ In seeking confirmation of the definition of world, Gaus asked Arendt if world is understood "as the space in which politics can originate". Then Arendt wished to expand the notion of both politics and world.

²⁴⁷ The capability of aesthetic judgment is not my concern here; I shall discuss it later in section 3 on Arendt's understanding of work of art.

delivers another tragedy of the modern world: “there is no mind to inherit and to question, to think and to remember” (BPF, 6).

In sum, I demonstrate Arendt’s vision of modern loss of the world from a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective. In other words, human existence is the confirmation of its own being. Without the presence of human beings who are so essential to testify and constitute a world, we are dealing with the two intertwined phenomena of a fading horizon and a numbing of the senses. Both of these dimensions help us to recognize that Arendt’s account of the modern loss of the world is, indeed, the modern loss of the human, which articulates the incapability of naming the ineffable because, by losing profoundly a relatively stable reference, people do not trust and follow their intuition but rely on the handbook of know-how, hypothetically, to guide themselves. After all, how I experience is how I live my life. Yet Arendt was positive about the human capacity to world insofar as the fundamental human activities of labour, work and action (which will be distinguished and discussed later), are still with us. In other words, the capacity is still with us, no matter what sociology, psychology and anthropology tell us about how we are defined as a social animal (HC, 323).

3.3 Building: labour and work

As has already been discussed, Arendt’s concept of the world can be reinterpreted as a transcendental element of human existence which relatively defines the finitude of humans’ existence on earth. We are born on the earth and by labouring, working and acting we transform the earth into a world. In other words, we erect a world upon the earth. In this context, the world-building capacities of human beings are varied. Each of the fundamental human activities – labour, work and action – corresponds to human conditions, respectively life, the world and plurality. In this section, I shall show how labour and work, no less crucial than action, are world-building capacities; and in the subsequent section, I shall distinguish action as a world-caring capacity.

According to Arendt, each fundamental human activity “corresponds to one of the basic human conditions under which life on earth has been given to man”.

Labour corresponds to life, work to worldliness and action to plurality (HC, 7-8). As a world-building capacity, labour has two prominent tasks: sustaining the world and protecting it from decay, both of which are closely connected with the three levels of human experiences, pain, pleasure and vitality, which manifest the most intimate relationship with the earth and nature. Yet they are also the least communicable, that is, presentable human experiences.

Arendt acknowledged Marx's contribution to glorifying labour as the "supreme world-building capacity of man" (HC, 101).²⁴⁸ Labour is the most primordial, authentic and even creative human activity; it is as simple as Heidegger's poetic explanation, "*Ich bin, du bist* mean: I dwell, you dwell". To dwell means 'to remain', 'to stay in place'. Being as dwelling also means, "to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specially to till the soil, to cultivate the vine" (BDT, 145).

Even so, the significance of labour as the human capacity to build a world was downplayed by Arendt.²⁴⁹ As the least worldly human activity, the domain of labourers is at home, within four walls, away from "adventures of the sea as well as public business on the *agora*" (HC, 101). This conclusion was drawn within her theoretic framework of private/public space. That is, Arendt's denigration of labour was based on its characteristic "life, necessity and animality" in contrast with the relative permanence, space of appearances and worldliness derived from, for example, her conceptualization of work and action. On this point, Patchen Markell problematized the conceptual architecture of *The Human Condition* in terms of the triad of territorial terms: labour, work and action. Most relevantly, Arendt separated this conceptual triad "to guard against the transgression of boundaries" in order to preserve and protect the public

²⁴⁸ Marx's concept of labour is still a controversial subject; Arendt thought that Marx was wrong in elevating labour over action as the supreme world-building capacity of man.

²⁴⁹ The significance of labour is acknowledged by some of her readers, however. See, MARKELL, P. 2011. Arendt's Work: On the Architecture of The Human Condition. *College Literature*, 38, 15-44.

where action is possible. Markell, however, likened the triad structure to a Möbius strip which “twists over on itself” and the separation only establishes and enforces “the impassible boundaries between space”.²⁵⁰ The action-centric analysis of Arendt’s political thought has been challenged recently. To restore the full dignity of labour as an indispensable part of *vita activa*, Ayten Gündoğdu critiqued Arendt’s phenomenology of *The Human Condition* and re-evaluated the hierarchical structure of the three fundamental activities in Arendtian study. I agree with Gündoğdu as part of Arendt’s account of labour, the once denigrated “life, necessity, and animality” could never exhaust the meaning of labour.²⁵¹

I therefore build on the work of Markell and Gündoğdu and seek to explicate Arendt’s ambivalence by demonstrating her recognition of human experiences of labouring and how they are a significant part of the durability and presentability of the world, especially when we are experiencing a loss of world in this rapidly developing technological era.

Relevant in this context, Arendt regarded labour as the least worldly human activity for two reasons. First, the human experiences of labouring to maintain the earth are the most ineffable ones and the ineffableness prohibits us from putting them onto the table, showing and sharing them with each other. Second, labour contributes and leaves little behind. However, the extent to which laboring is worldly does not necessarily mean that labour never had built the world. Contrarily, labour is the most essential world-building capacity of human beings for two reasons; first, labour defends the world against nature, and second, it provides the self-sustenance of human existence. Both protection and self-preservation require labour’s unending fight, such as

²⁵⁰ However, as Markell wrote, “Arendt’s distinctions is always and only the work of *separation*, of establishing and enforcing impassible boundaries between spaces – whether those spaces are literal or figurative, concretely social or merely conceptual.” p. 18.

²⁵¹ GÜNDOĞDU, A. 2015. *Rightlessness in an Age of Rights: Hannah Arendt and the Contemporary Struggles of Migrants*, New York, Oxford University Press.

monotonous toil and daily chores, against nature's perpetual invasion into the human artifice, which threatens the "durability of the world and its fitness for human use" (HC, 100-101).

In the following section, I shall discuss three key aspects, as living experiences, of labour which remind us of the transcendental dimension of human beings who are capable of working: pain and happiness, both of which constitute vitality.

First, labour has been understood since ancient times as the burden of life, the Augean stables (HC 101).²⁵² For instance, of the three activities, only labour has the connotation of pain and trouble (HC, 80). Indeed, the experience of pain – derived from life, necessity and animality – is the main reason why labour has been denigrated since ancient times. For the ancient Greeks, perpetual labour was Prometheus's punishment. Like all other evils, labour came out of Pandora's Box (HC, 83). Liveliness and vitality, as well as the "most natural pleasures" of human life, could be denied man along with the perfect elimination of toil and trouble, the pain and effort which is part of the biological cycle of life in which pain and pleasure are so closely bound together. According to Arendt, the pain and effort of the human condition are not just "symptoms which can be removed without changing life itself" but the modes through which life itself is felt. After all, for mortals, "the 'easy life of the gods' would be a lifeless life" (HC, 120). Furthermore, a degree of joy can also be found in labour. Gardeners feel satisfaction after seeing their beautiful garden being appreciated or rewarded by others; politicians feel rewarded by applause and recognition from the people whom they serve and cleaners are happy when their work is done and they get paid. More importantly, being part of nature, all human efforts are made on behalf of future generations: our children and our

²⁵² In Greek mythology, the cleaning of the Augean stables was one of the twelve difficult feats, called labours, imposed on Heracles for killing his wife and children; they were first recorded in an epic poem by Peisander (now lost) around 600BC: they have come to signify a condition or place marked by a great accumulation of filth or corruption.

children's children. The 'blessing of life' is the fertility of *animal laborans* since "the reward of toil and trouble lies in nature's fertility" (106-7).

Pain and pleasure therefore both constitute what Arendt called the "sheer blessing of being alive", the vitality of human existence. Indeed, the human experience of this sheer bliss can "remain and swing contentedly" even if nature has prescribed the ever-recurring cycle of "toiling and resting, laboring and consuming" (106). To put it another way: what did it mean to be alive for Arendt? To be alive is a worldly phenomenon, as opposed to natural rhythm of life for Arendt, which means "to live in a world that preceded one's own arrival and will survive one's own departure" (LM, I:20):

On this level of sheer being alive, appearance and disappearance, as they follow upon each other, are the primordial events, which as such mark out time, the time span between birth and death. The *finite life* span allotted to each living creature determines not merely its life expectancy but also its *time experience*; it provides the secret prototype for all time measurements no matter how far these then may transcend the allotted life span into past and future. (LM, I:20-21, italics added by the current author)

Arendt explicitly differentiated between technical and temporal time, regarding how "the finite time span" determines not only scientific data such as life expectancy – how many years, months and days I shall breathe on the earth, but also, my time experience – a how intensely my life is experienced with my labouring for survival, working for recognition, or acting for service and love for the world. In a word, the absolute finitude of human existence is the secret prototype for all measurements of time.

In view of this, the three aspects of labouring experiences can never be separated. On the contrary, they are closely bound together with biological human life. Arendt carefully discerned two layers of happiness which labour brings to human experiences: the absence of pain in labour's "inevitably brief spell of relief and joy" afterwards, and the blessing of life as "effort and gratification follow each other as closely" enough. The absence of pain is defined as happiness in one's own private existence, a definition with variations

of “bodily condition for experiencing the world” only when the body is felt in the “short intermediate stage between pain and non-pain”. So, happiness of this kind is rather a release from pain than its absence. Sensualists’ opinion of happiness is the most radical form of a non-political and worldless experience because when the intensity of pain reaches a particular point, the bodily senses are thrown back to the personal ineffable and inexplicable bodily sensations. With this withdrawal, we step away from what the world has to give to us. This sensory withdrawal marks philosophers’ “mental effort ... to liberate man from the world” which is “always an act of imagination in which the mere absence of pain is experienced and actualized into a feeling of being released from it” (HC, 113). The bliss of life, however, is “so that happiness is a concomitant of the process itself, just as pleasure is a concomitant of the functioning of a healthy body” (HC, 108-9). Crucial here is time, which determines whether or not the happiness is intermediate or concomitant with labour

Since time will not allow happiness to last forever, happiness can be dried up by the unending repetition of labour. No matter whether it is the life of the poor, the wretched, and the miserable who are driven by necessity, or the life of the rich people who are entirely free from having to make any effort, it inevitably belongs to the cycle of the endless repetition of labour. The elemental happiness, absence of pain or bliss of life could be “mercilessly and barrenly” exhausted by the simple fact of being alive (HC, 108). Interestingly, the boredom of the effort-free life of pure consumption constitutes part of the “burden of biological life”. Indeed, the burden could be eliminated by the use of servants, whose chief function was to carry “the burden of consumption in the household” rather than produce for the larger society. Even the *polis* was believed to be the centre of consumption, whereas the medieval city was a production centre (HC 119).

In view of this, the painful experience of the daily fight against nature’s “relentless repetition” is not natural but man-made. The relentless labour of slaves or workers in the factory is not ‘natural’ in the same way as the natural fertility of the *animal laborans* as a species of humankind with inexhaustible

strength and unlimited time as long as it unceasingly reproduces its own life. What is 'natural' in the relentless repetitive cycle is not the activity itself but the experience: the pain (HC, 112). Only the pain in labour is what nature gives us; when labouring, the "human body ... is also thrown back upon itself, concentrates upon nothing but its own being alive, and remains imprisoned in its metabolism with nature without ever transcending or freeing itself from the recurring cycle of its own functioning" (HC, 115). Such is the natural human experience of worldlessness or the loss of world through the unnatural relentless repetition of labour.²⁵³ The natural experiences of labour are unworldly because, in labouring and consuming, the human body is the least concealed realm, and therefore the most private property:

The body becomes indeed the quintessence of all property because it is the only thing one could not share even if one wanted to. Nothing, in fact, is less common and less communicable, and therefore more securely shielded against the visibility and audibility of the public realm, than what goes on within the confines of the body, its pleasure and its pains, its laboring and its consuming. (HC, 112)

Nobody can share and fully communicate feelings, even they want to, as long as they are busy with fulfilment of needs and are thereby caught up and imprisoned in the privacy of their own body, according to Arendt, not only

²⁵³ "In any event, pain and the concomitant experience of release from pain are the only sense experiences that are so independent from the world that they do not contain the experience of any worldly object. The pain caused by a sword or the tickling caused by a feather indeed tells me nothing whatsoever of the quality or even the worldly existence of a sword or a feather. Only an irresistible distrust in the capacity of human senses for an adequate experience of the world – and this distrust is the origin of all specifically modern philosophy – can explain the strange and even absurd choice that uses phenomena which, like pain or tickling, obviously prevent our senses' functioning normally, as examples of all senses experience, and can derive from them the subjectivity of 'secondary' and even 'primary' qualities. If we had no other sense perceptions than these in which the body senses itself, the reality of the outer world would not only be open to doubt, we would not even possess any notion of a world at all." (HC, 114-115)

Also, "Labor's products, the products of man's metabolism with nature, do not stay in the world long enough to become a part of it, and the laboring activity itself, concentrated exclusively on life and its maintenance, is oblivious of the world to the point of worldlessness." (HC, 118)

because the feelings are so mysteriously personal, but more importantly, because the metaphysically-hijacked language does not allow humans to communicate the ineffable.

Pain, regret, shame or agony – all sensory feelings are roughly categorical but quintessentially and subtly ineffable and impenetrable. They are enclosed and confined within the body and protect humans from the “visibility and audibility of the public realm” and thus protect them from any moral or political, even psychological assessment as long as they do not unleash them into the public domain. In this regard, Arendt also differentiated two modes of ‘lie’: lying about facts or lying about feelings. But underneath the ethical shielding, human beings could experience the most radical exile from the world: being forced to experience the extremity of the unbearable pain in coercion, such as in slavery – being totally banished from the world (112). In this regard, *animal laborans* does not flee from but is ejected from the world, and when this happens, a love for the world is ushered in in Arendt’s political philosophy, which I shall further discuss in Chapter 5 on the concept of the Latin term *amor mundi*.

Investigating the human capacity for life through the three aspects of human experiences of labour is significant because, first, the labouring process alongside the experiences guarantees a sense of reality. This is especially meaningful in the technological world when virtual traces and images are prominently influencing our perception of the world and ourselves. In fact, emancipating and liberating human beings from labour completely was a frightening prospect for Arendt. “without pain or effort”, she wrote, “all human productivity would be sucked into an enormously intensified life process and would follow automatically ... its ever-recurrent natural cycle” (HC, 132). Without the pain or effort of labour, “the natural rhythm of life” would be enormously magnified and intensified by “the rhythm of machines”, but human existence would end up in nothing because the chief character of the rhythm of life “with respect to the world” would never change, and it continues to wear down the world’s relative transcendence: durability. With the ever-recurrent natural rhythm of life, we can never be at home in the world since the natural

rhythm of life is never the same, with worldly phenomena appearing and disappearing, manifesting and vanishing. Moreover, our trust in the reality of life and of the world is different. Our trust in the worldly reality “derives primarily from the permanence *and* durability of the world” (HC, 120). In contrast, trust in the reality of life “depends almost exclusively on the intensity with which life is felt”. The intensity of life “is so great and so elementary that wherever it prevails, in bliss or sorrow, it blacks out all other worldly reality”. The carefree life, without labour and effort, loses vitality, affinity with nature, and the refined “sensitivity to the beautiful things in the world” (HC, 120).

Arendt therefore distinguished between the modern age’s political emancipation of the labouring classes and the technological or economical “emancipation of the laboring activity itself”. She argued that human beings began with the former but ended up with the latter. That is, the consumer society arose from admitting the labourers into the political arena, but the scientific and technological emancipation of the labouring activity takes the throne. The point is, the modern technological success in emancipating labour is a sign of “leveling all human activities to the common denominator of securing the necessities of life and providing for their abundance” – the ideal of *animal laborans* (HC, 126). The danger is, however, that the technological emancipation of labour not only failed to “usher in an age of freedom” but also “force(d) all mankind ... under the yoke of necessity” (HC, 130).

Given this, decisively relevant to the transcendental dimension of human existence, these human experiences, labour/pain, pleasure and vitality, are sensibly ineffable and the ineffability can be subtly differentiated with regard to the degree of freedom: whether or not I am willingly taking on the burden and “the toil and trouble of life”:

The fact is that the human capacity for life in the world always implies an ability to transcend and to be alienated from the process of life itself, which vitality and liveliness can be conserved only to the extent that men are willing to take the burden, the toil and trouble of life, upon themselves. (HC, 120-121)

So far, I have discussed three intensely ineffable human experiences while we labour: pain, pleasure and vitality, as well as labour's not-to-be-ignored world-building capacity: the "daily care and maintenance" of human beings themselves and the world in which they live in, and both tasks of labour contribute to guaranteeing the durability and presentability of the world. In particular, I argue that self-preservation is itself the most significant contribution to the world that labour could provide. Briefly, to be human is to live life in harmony with its natural design; being mortal is being alive. And labour, the human capacity for life, is the transcendental capacity to world with regard to the most transcendental part of the labouring experience – pain, pleasure and vitality – how the 'mechanics' of temporality (human experiences of time) work through the process of labouring.

As demonstrated above, the modern loss of world, in the fading horizon (durability) and the numbing of the senses (presentability), does not eradicate the human capacity for life and it certainly does not necessarily mean that modern human beings are losing their capacities, so long as they "persist in making, fabricating, and building" the world. But the world-building capacities belong exclusively to the few artists who escape more and more from the "range of ordinary human experiences" as Arendt observed (HC, 323). I shall next discuss the transcendental aspect of 'work,' conditioned by worldliness, in Arendt's writing.

If nature and the earth generally constitute the condition of human life, then the world and the things of world constitute the condition under which this specifically human life can be at home on earth. (HC, 134)

The world is made up of the human artifices which we use daily: the tables, the chairs, the teacups, the buildings and so on. Only by erecting a durable world between ephemeral man and eternal nature can we retain the sameness and retrieve our identity every morning when we wake up without being bewildered by the Heraclitean river ('No man steps in the same river twice') simply by "being related to the same chair and the same table". Paradoxically, the durability of the world is "what usage wears out". In that sense, durability

only gives the human artifices their “relative independence” and objectivity – standing against their living makers and users: the human beings (HC, 136-137). The tables and chairs will eventually return to nature and again become wood, and the wood will decay into the soil to nourish the trees – the material for making more tables and chairs. Without a world between humans and nature, there is eternal movement but no objectivity.

Similar to Heidegger’s claim that “to be a work is to set up a world”, I think, work for Arendt was exclusively building up a permanent and constant world. So work makes the human world possible and the human condition of work is “worldliness” according to Arendt. The world work in Arendt’s view, however, transcends the perpetual cycle of labouring and consuming (HC, 97).²⁵⁴ Work begins in the planning of an article of use or of beauty, and ends in the completion of the act of fabrication. Work provides the furniture, artifices and stuff to the world. The work always requires some material from which it will be converted into some fabrication and transformed into a worldly object (HC 96).²⁵⁵

The thing-character of the world is a much more obvious and decisive factor by which to determine and distinguish work from labour. The nuanced difference, however, is that labour produces consumer goods and work produces use goods. The worldly character of the produced things is constituted by their location, function and length of stay in the world. For instance, the difference in degree of how worldly a produced thing is depends on its life expectancy in the world; a loaf of bread, say, lasts for a day whereas

²⁵⁴ “Without a world into which men are born and from which they die, there would be nothing but changeless eternal recurrence, the deathless everlastingness of the human as of all other animal species.”

²⁵⁵ “The man-made world of things, the human artifice erected by *homo faber*, becomes a home for mortal man, whose stability will endure and outlast the everlasting movement of their lives and actions, only inasmuch as it transcends both the sheer functionalism of things produced for consumption and the sheer utility of objects produced for use.”

a table lasts for generations (HC, 96).²⁵⁶

A world would not be possible at all without the products of work which guarantee the permanence and durability of the work world. The work world includes everything created by men. Within this work world of durable things, we find ourselves in a familiar environment constituted by constant consumption. We consume and use the world of things, and at the same time, we become used and consumed by the sheer labouring of our body and the work of our hands. The world for Arendt was always the man-made home erected upon the earth and the things of the world. The things of the world do not mean the things which are consumed but the things which are used. For Arendt, it was the durability of the things of the world which gives their “relative independence from (the) men who produce and use them” (HC, 136). The objectivity of the things of the world makes them withstand (*gegenstand*, or ‘stand against’) and endure the erosion of nature and the process of use for a period of time in order to meet the need of man. A chair is used and furnished, thereby built up as part of a world. Strictly speaking, like Heidegger, only artwork was the product of work for Arendt.

Among the human artifices which guarantee the durability of the world, works of art stand out prominently as “the most intensely worldly of all tangible things” since they attain permanence and durability throughout ages “almost untouched” by the corrosive effect of natural process (HC, 167):

Nowhere else does the sheer durability of the world of things appear in such purity and clarity, nowhere else therefore does this thing-world reveal itself as spectacularly as the non-mortal home for mortal beings. It is as though world stability had become transparent in the permanence of art, so that a premonition of immortality, not the immortality of the soul or of life but of something immortal achieved by mortal hands, has

²⁵⁶ “Human life, in so far as it is world-building, is engaged in a constant process of reification, and the degree of worldliness of produced things, which all together form the human artifice, depends upon their greater or lesser permanence in the world itself.”

become tangibly present, to shine and to be seen, to sound and to be heard, to speak and to be read. (HC, 168)

Arendt marveled how mortal human beings can achieve immortality. Such an achievement, “tangibly present, to shine and to be seen, to sound and to be heard, to speak and to be read”, is utterly important for this phenomenal world. Arendt traced the immediate sources, products and working processes of artwork. The source of a work of art is the human capacity for thought, including human capabilities such as “feelings, wants, and needs”; the products of works of art she thought are things of human artifice, such as “books, paintings, sculptures, or compositions”; the process is to transform the “mute and inarticulate despondency” into things, which is the same as the workmanship of fabrication or reification – the “primordial instrument of human hands” such as “writing something down, painting an image, modeling a figure, or composing a melody” (HC, 168-69):

Thought is related to feeling and transforms its mute and inarticulate despondency, as exchange transforms the naked greed of desire and usage transforms the desperate longing of needs – until they all are fit to enter the world and to be transformed into things, to become reified. In each instance, a human capacity which by its very nature is world-open and communicative transcends and releases into the world a passionate intensity from its imprisonment within the self. (HC, 168)

The transcending characteristics of human existence are evident during the process of creating a work of art. First, human capacity is innately “world-open and communicative”, that is, presentable; and it must transcend and release into the world those enclosed and invisible thoughts, feelings, wants and needs. For Arendt, in the case of art works, reification was more than just transformation, it was transfiguration: “a veritable metamorphosis” into variable forms (HC, 168). Second, the price of reification or materialization is life itself. Art works would end up being a “dead letter” without a “living spirit” willing to resurrect them. In other words, works of art need viewers, spectators, an audience or connoisseurs to bring life the deadness derived from the work itself, based on a distance between the ‘home’ in the heart or head of a human being

and the 'eventual destination' in the world. In that case, according to Arendt, poetry and music are the least worldly art forms because their "material consists of sound and words" (HC, 169).

Arendt therefore investigated two types of transcendence from the phenomenon of the modern idolatry of creative genius: 1) the artist transcends his skill and workmanship, and 2) a work of art outlives/transcends its creator. The phenomenon of creative genius addresses the modern age's "obsession with the unique signature of each artist" and the "unprecedented sensitivity to style". The phenomenon is accompanied by the rise of a labouring and consuming society when an ideal of a genius emerges and replaces the plain notion of a craftsman or artist. The obsession is preoccupied with an assumption that the work of genius represents the distinctness and uniqueness which we can find in human greatness. This is the transcendence of human beings as artists through their skill and workmanship; and it is similar to the way in which the uniqueness of somebody "transcends the sum of his qualities" (HC, 210). In this way, man's products seem to "be more and essentially greater than himself". However, if the style of an artist only serves as a mirror in which "to identify authorship", then the artist as a living person remains unrecognizable. In Arendt's words, "the idolization of genius harbors the same degradation of the human person as the other tenets prevalent in commercial society" (HC, 211) because "the essence of who somebody is cannot be reified by himself".

For Arendt, however, the competition between a work of art and its author is just vainglory because our indispensable human pride makes us believe that "who somebody is transcends in greatness and importance anything he can do and produce" (*ibid.*) Sadly, Arendt viewed the modern phenomenon of transcendence as condescension:

Only the vulgar will transcend to derive their pride from what they have done; they will, by this condescension, become the 'slaves and prisoners' of their own faculties and find out, should anything more be left in them than sheer stupid vanity, that to be one's own slave and prisoner is no less bitter and perhaps even more shameful than to be the servant to somebody else. (HC, 211)

Arendt's suspicion of the creator/creation distinction was discussed in her doctoral thesis (see Chapter 4). Similarly, here Arendt was concerned that a work of art would corner its creator into a real predicament rather than vanity. She worried that the so-called transcendence might turn someone into the "slave and prisoner" of his own work or genius. Confined within his own work, the creator is constantly watched, analysed and assessed and this will cause the creative genius to become a life burden for the living creator. In such a case, the "saving grace of all really great gifts", according to Arendt, is that the people who carry the burden of genius "remain superior to what they have done, at least as long as the source of creativity is alive", because the source of genius "springs from who they are and remains outside the actual work process as well as independent of what they may achieve" (211).

In sum, therefore, through this discussion of how labour and work, as worlding capacities, enable us to build the world as long as the fundamental activities are still with us, we have exemplified the transcendental dimension of the way of being human, namely through the building process. Now we move the discussion from building to caring, and in the following section I shall characterize 'action' as the third worlding capacity: caring for the world.

3.4 Caring: action and beyond

As discussed at length above, despite the fact that the modern loss of the world has disempowered our ability to experience and name the ineffable, we nevertheless retain the capacity to build and care for the world as long as the fundamental human activities are still with us. In this section, I shall demonstrate how action, as the political capacity for words and deeds, is also an exclusive world-caring capacity which lifts human beings above their earthly existence by inserting them into a world of appearances to create a web of relationships and to deal with human affairs.

If labour and work are the basic human capacities to build and maintain the world from erosion into nature, then action is the political human capacity *par excellence*. Indeed, action is the "miracle that saves the world" and the

realm of human affairs from its normal and natural ruin over time (HC, 247). There are three fundamental accessible ways in which the human capacity to act/speak can testify to the meta-dimension of the human condition: disclosing the agent as 'who', crossing the boundaries and building relationships.

First, according to Arendt, "without a name, a 'who' attached to it", political action is as futile as it is meaningless (HC 181). As a transcendental human capacity of worlding, action is capable of revealing who somebody is by carrying over (metaphorizing or *trans*-lating) what is invisible into something visible. Frustratingly, even if the speaker or doer seems to be "plainly visible", we are still confronted by the irresistible difficulty of presenting the 'whoness' through "unequivocal verbal expression" (HC, 181):

The manifestation of who the speaker and doer unexchangeably is, though it is plainly visible, retains a curious intangibility that confounds all efforts toward unequivocal verbal expression. (HC 181)

According to the previous formula of transcendence, the specific uniqueness of 'who' is a transcendental idea, perceivable (plainly visible or tangible) and ineffable (resisting verbal expression). The whoness always transcends what somebody is for two reasons. First, the veiling and unveiling of 'who' is an endlessly concurrent process: not only can the 'who' be "hidden in complete silence and perfect passivity", but also is never shown completely. Second, the disclosure of 'who' is always implicit in 'what' he says and does. The 'who' can be deceitful, in terms of whether to display or hide particular "qualities, gifts, talents, and shortcomings" (HC, 179).

Our vocabulary always leads us astray: whenever we attempt to say 'who' the speaker or doer is, we end up saying 'what' he or she is (HC, 181). For Arendt, labour and work define 'what' a man is, whilst only free action and speech reveal and tell 'who' somebody is. 'What' presupposes that human beings have an essence in the sense of the attributes or properties which things have, whereas 'who' reveals the humanness of human being which is irreplaceably unique. And only a god can know and define the human 'nature'

as long as the god is able to speak about a 'who' in the language of a 'what':

The only 'somebody' it [story] reveals is its hero, and it is the only medium in which the originally intangible manifestation of a uniquely distinct 'who' can become tangible *ex post facto* through action and speech. *Who* somebody is or was we can know only by knowing the story of which he is himself the hero – his biography, in other words; everything else we know of him, including the work he may have produced and left behind, tells us only *what* he is or was. (HC 186, italics in the original)

The already existing human relationships grant man his birthright identity upon which he can develop his own life story. But stories reveal an agent who is never the author or producer. An agent is "an actor and sufferer, but nobody is its author" (184), mainly because actors are always at the same time sufferers; and "to do and to suffer are like opposite sides of the same coin" (HC, 190).

Second, for Arendt, action is characteristically capable of forcing open all limitations and cutting across all boundaries (HC, 190-1). An action is characteristically boundless, as it "has an inherent tendency to force open all limitations and cut across all boundaries" (HC, 190-1). Since, from my perspective, the actor/sufferer distinction is no longer feasible for human beings who are capable of transcending and metaphorizing the cognitive boundaries and thereby transferring and generating meaning to the 'being' of human being through one of the three fundamental human activities: the boundless action. As a result, the disclosure of the 'who' through action and speech always locates within an already existing web of human relationships so that the consequences can be seen, heard and felt immediately (HC, 184). Moreover, due to the frailty and unpredictability of human affairs, limitations and boundaries can never provide a reliable framework for future generations to refer to. Human beings are carrying across the traditional subject/object duality; the consequences of actions and reactions move in chains but never in a closed circle.

Intriguingly, in addition to the boundlessness of political action, Arendt introduced a "narrower sense" of the boundlessness in terms of "human interrelatedness" which was "only the result of the boundless multitude of

people involved” to the extent that a single, small act “bears the seed” which “suffices to change every constellation” (HC, 190).

However, cutting across boundaries and limitations does not mean that action is meant to blur boundaries. Rather purposely, action serves to separate, relate and bind. So third, action is capable of establishing and creating an invisible web – the metaphor which clearly captures the invisible feature of the realm of human affairs. This realm “consists of the web of human relationships” and “exists wherever men live together” (HC, 183-84). What unites and separates the web is the invisible space (*inter-set*) between human beings (182).

The significance of the invisibility of the web of human relationships in politics lies in the fact that it vividly explains and visualizes the intangibility of human affairs – the subject of politics. For one thing, the web is ignored by materialism in politics. The “basic error of all materialism”, according to Arendt, is “to overlook the inevitability” of how the web is closely bound to the objective world of things. The web is not, in Marxian terminology, the “superfluous superstructure” attached to a building, such as a solid economic foundation or stable power structure (HC, 183) because the other, traditional philosophy has mystified the web since Plato, who assumed that there was an invisible hand behind the scene controlling and predetermining the fate of humans. Even the modern concept of history was originally coined to designate the metaphor of an invisible actor pulling the strings. So Plato, according to Arendt, was the forerunner of, for example, Christian providence, the well-known metaphor – the ‘invisible hand’ in Adam Smith, Nature, the ‘world spirit’ in Hegel and Marx’s class interest. They all have one thing in common; they try to explain some unsolvable problems or some ‘mysterious’ power which pushes human beings into a particular history or destiny, but this is not the case.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ “The invisible actor behind the scenes is an invention arising from a mental perplexity

Extraordinarily, this mentality corresponds to the loss of human experience in the victory of the society of *animal laborans*, since contemplation and thought become a mere “function of the brain” (HC, 321-2). Again, there is no invisible actor, no author or producer, only an agent being both actor and sufferer. We live our life by opening ourselves to the world, living through experiencing. The story is not to be created or written by my own free will, but only developed or lived through interactions with others and told as biography by others.²⁵⁸ Arendt also acknowledged man’s capacity to create his own condition at any time and in any place, as long as the condition of human sheer togetherness is fulfilled.²⁵⁹ Only actions are “entirely dependent upon (the) constant presence of others” and can save man’s dignity as a human being, not a beast or a god. “The law of the earth is plurality” (LM, I:19). In this regard, the condition to appear is plurality, because nobody exists in the singular. Plurality is the human condition which answers the question of why there is somebody rather than nobody, because plurality is the condition of the possibility for action and hence for worlding.

In this regard, Loidolt offered an insight into Arendt’s phenomenology of political plurality. According to Loidolt, Arendt’s “historical and political treatment of experience” are pluralistic in nature; indeed, Arendt conceptualized actualized plurality as “an experience itself” and as something which is “only accessible through experience”. Phenomenology shows the “transcendental structures of experience”. The ontological structure of human existence as the transcendental is “to be drawn out from an ontico-ontological hermeneutics of

but corresponding to no real experience.” (185)

²⁵⁸ (HC, 97) “The chief characteristic of this specifically human life, whose appearance and disappearance constitute worldly events, is that it is itself always full of events which ultimately can be told as a story, establish a biography.”

²⁵⁹ Human existence is always *conditioned* existence, as Arendt claimed. As a *conditioning force*, the ‘objectivity’ along with the thing-character of the world and the human condition supplement each other, because “it would be impossible without things, and things would be a heap of unrelated articles, a non-world, if they were not the conditioners of human existence.” (HC, 9)

experiences” (BT, §4.9). This is how hermeneutic phenomenology connects hermeneutics and the transcendental with experience and human life, but not necessarily as “in rigid *a priori* forms”. The structure of human experience as something to think, to know and to do is significant. Loidolt moved the thinking into the familiar human capacity to transcend which we usually take for granted, such as “Perceiving, recollecting, fantasizing, conceptualizing, counting, remembering, loving, acting, singing, etc.” which, according to Loidolt, are “all different forms of consciously lived experiences, of ‘acts’ or ‘comportments’, each of which has their different correlates that can be analyzed phenomenologically”.²⁶⁰

In short, as an intrinsic human activity, action is capable of caring for the world. That is, action is the human capacity to transcend in terms of three aspects: disclosing the agent, crossing the boundaries and building relationships. Thus the phenomenology of Arendt’s concept of action aims at achieving earthly immortality through words and deeds: a sense of transcendence. In other words, the capacity to transcend is the capacity to translate, to carry over, to ferry the ineffableness to human perception and thus make it presentable through action and speech.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed worlding as the human capacity to transcend from Arendt’s major text, *The Human Condition*, and I have analysed how three activities, labour, work and action, together constitute the remaining two phases of worlding, building and caring, in an attempt to highlight Arendt’s idiosyncratic interpretation of the human. Another phase of worlding, naming, was discussed in Chapter 2, where I discussed the mysterious moment of the

²⁶⁰ LOIDOLT, S. 2018. *Phenomenology of plurality: Hannah Arendt on political intersubjectivity*, New York, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. Although both Husserl’s and Heidegger’s ‘theories’ are built on experiences, such experiences are by no means something “personal, subjective, or individual.” (pp. 82-83)

primitive encounter between human and things (including human affairs) from its Heideggerian phenomenological and philosophical observation to Arendt's political appropriation. Worlding is human capacities such as promising, forgiving, building, creating, speaking, dwelling, caring, acting, augmenting and loving.

To this further explore, in the following four chapters, I shall carefully analyse four major concepts which each represent one particular ineffably transcendental ground in her work. I shall further distinguish between worlding capacity as capability (in Part One) and carrier (in Part Two). Each part will focus on two concepts with respective origins: Greek and Roman. To exemplify, I shall examine the textual evidence in her work, such as the site of human existence in Arendt's appropriation of Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenological analysis of the *polis*, and the depth of human existence in her restoration of the original meaning and political experience in the Latin concepts of *auctoritas* and *amor mundi*. Arendt occasionally referred to "the darkness of human heart" to describe historical awareness of particular kinds of the impenetrability and inaccessibility of what is going on beneath the surface or look of a face, and we are also perplexed in terms of how and why such darkness of the human heart can empower our love for the world; finally, in the chapter on *logos*, I shall consider Heidegger's reminder of the natural, cosmic or mysterious utterance of the universe in the western philosophical tradition of *logos*, which also can be described as the primitive original understanding of Greek political life, as well as their first-hand contact with nature. I understand *logos* as the Greek human activity of naming. Naming constitutes one phase of worlding and the naming moment of *logos* represents the most natural and mysterious experiences of the Greek thinkers, which we today refer to as ineffable. What is ineffable is when *logos* and *mythos* are one and the same in Greek thinking.

In the next two chapters, I shall analyse four human capacities: *amor mundi* as loving, *logos* as speaking, *polis* as remembering and *auctoritas* as

augmenting.²⁶¹ As capability, *amor mundi* further elaborates loving as the power to world toward which human existence transcends, and *logos* exemplifies the traditional understanding of being human and how human speech as capability is the essential determination of being human. As carriers of human existence, both *polis* and *auctoritas* accommodate human beings in the sense of time rather than space. If *polis* is all about the capacity of human memories as carriers of time, then *auctoritas* is about how human beings are capable of building upon that basis of time and creating something new out of the established old world as a way of augmenting.

²⁶¹ I aim to distil the fundamentally transcendental aspects of being human in Arendt's political thinking into the following statement: human being is meta being with the capacity to world. With four chapters and four concepts, I look into and beyond questions like: How does human world? How do I justify that human worlds? What is Arendt's way of worlding?

Part TWO

Capacity as Capability

4 Amor Mundi: The Capability to Love

In the era of data technology, data can be used to predict and manipulate economics, politics and international relations. Information about people's daily lives is collected and processed as data which can be transformed into a new form of power. But now that people live in this modern technologically defined world, they have to use tools such as smart phones, computers, Airbnb and Uber. If the first and second industrial revolutions turned the earth into a globe, then this time, the earth could become flattened again into a two-dimensional grid map. In this flattened world, technology has taken over the vantage point which used to be occupied by God.²⁶² Those who sacrifice privacy for comfort also relinquish a degree of freedom and sovereignty. That is, when we let the machines do our thinking and speaking, we give up our freedom.

In Chapter 3, I discussed the transcendental characteristics of the world as an existential horizon for human beings: durability and presentability. I also discussed why we need politics, as a distinctive perspective infiltrating the realm of human affairs, to shed light on and to protect the transcendental dimension of human beings. The significance of this way of understanding helps us distinguish human life – between birth and death as a sequence of worldly events which 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

²⁶² Like currency, data are held by those who also manoeuvre power. Very basically, data-processing, analysing and interpreting cut human life into pieces, like digits, numbers, even casualties. What used to constitute our daily life – a daily workout, quality time with family, going to an exhibition of art, hanging out with friends – are now being fragmented and harnessed as profitable motion pictures of lines and points.

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).

In this regard, 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).

The gist of the dialectics 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 Michael Ferguson suggested.²⁶³ 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. Guided by this spirit, I emphasize the ‘unwavering facing up to’, the importance of the

²⁶³ Although in different languages, Michael Ferguson (2012) had a similar concern. Ferguson however drew an intersubjective picture of Arendt’s idea of sharing the world: “people share when they have first-person experience of themselves as inhabiting the world together with plural others” FERGUSON, M. L. 2012. Sharing the World in Common with Others. *Sharing Democracy* [Online]. Ferguson discussed Arendt’s critical engagement with Little Rock High School in 1957. “This picture highlights the role that all humans play in *building* and *sustaining* a world that can be experienced as common. That is, it highlights humanity’s *ordinary* and radically democratic capacity for political freedom: *the capacity to shape the world we share in common with others*”.

indispensable boundaries and fences in loving the world. 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.²⁶⁴

To tackle with this an interpretive goal, some theoretical puzzles have to be dealt with within Arendt's idiosyncratic thinking. First, the translation of *amor mundi* is a contradiction in terms insofar as, "love, in its very nature, is unworldly"; Arendt sometimes suggested that it is 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 which she acknowledged was love toward persons, rather than any collective groups or people (JW, 466-467).²⁶⁵ Further, to what extent is *amor mundi* meaningful and achievable in a political and social context? Finally, how do we justify Arendt's claim 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.²⁶⁶ 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.²⁶⁷ Thus, by loving their beloved ones, human beings can carry across

²⁶⁴ Plausibly, three dimensions of love as the power of life in Arendt were introduced by Liesbeth Schoonheim (2018). The first dimension is how the human heart can be adapted to and deal with our environment, in the sense that love has the capacity to harness the courage to confront and face the meaninglessness. The second is that love overcomes death by remembrance, either by our beloved ones or by leaving traces on the earth even if our flesh has gone to ashes. The third is the "world-denying and life-distaining" dimension of love as victory over death, with a new born. In general, Schoonheim offered an in-depth analysis of the notion of love in Arendt's thought diary, particularly in May 1953, as the most extensive of its kind. The power of life is constituted simply by life, humanity and death. See, SCHOONHEIM, L. 2018. Among Lovers: Love and Personhood in Hannah Arendt. *Arendt Studies*, 2, 99–124. p.114. I use the English translation of Schoonheim in the following sections.

²⁶⁵ In this regard, for her, "neither the German people, the French, the Americans, nor the working class or anything of that sort".

²⁶⁶ As Maria Tamboukou understood it, Arendt's conceptualization of love was inspected through her acceptance of the Augustinian concept of memory and philosophical analysis of the binding forces of human faculties: thinking, willing and judging. TAMBOUKOU, M. 2013. Love, Narratives, Politics: Encounters between Hannah Arendt and Rosa Luxemburg. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 30, 35–56.

²⁶⁷ Artists, farmers and politicians must have different ways of expressing and demonstrating similar

(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 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)²⁶⁸ because love “possesses an unequalled 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, in the first section, I shall seek to demonstrate how Arendt broke with but also embraced the tradition of the religious and philosophical interpretation of love in her political understanding of love as capability. The origin of Arendt’s conception of *amor mundi* can be traced back to her 1929 doctoral thesis on Augustine’s concept of love intertwined with her affinity with Heidegger’s teaching.²⁶⁹ Arendt’s critique of Augustine’s ‘neighbourly love’ contains two connotations: first, to have neighbours; second, to love them. Although Augustine never ignored human togetherness, his neighbourly love is hypocritical and impossible as it “fails to explain how the absolutely isolated person can have a neighbor at all” (LA,

impulses, sensations or even commitment in loving moments.

²⁶⁸ Quoted from SCHOONHEIM, L. 2018. Among Lovers: Love and Personhood in Hannah Arendt. *Arendt Studies*, 2, 99–124..

²⁶⁹ For the literature on Arendt’s thesis and Heidegger’s influence, see, BERNAUER, J. W. 2012. *Amor Mundi: Explorations in the Faith and Thought of Hannah Arendt*, Springer Science & Business Media. BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. p. 32 note, 24. MAIER-KATKIN, D. 2010b. *Stranger from abroad: Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, friendship, and forgiveness*, New York, W.W. Norton. p. 344: “With love as her theme, Arendt was thinking against Heidegger, but was still with him in the thinking.” (p.47).

91).²⁷⁰ Specifically, I shall discuss here the rationale behind Arendt's thesis as well as her indebtedness to Heidegger's philosophy of care, self and death, which are inseparable aspects of her later understanding of love as human power. In doing so, I shall reiterate the subtlety of her understanding of transcendence as human existence in comparison with that of ontological absoluteness and theological divinity. Unlike theological and philosophical tradition, in politics, human beings are taken as lovers of the world who are capable of enabling the world to transcend.

In section two, I shall therefore seek to establish a sense of the modern loss of lovers in Arendt's writing, structured into two aspects: loss of lovers of the world as home and loss of the capability to love. First, from Arendt's depiction of the metaphor of the desert, with regard the modern condition of two-fold uprootedness of today's human conditions – escaping earth and loss of tradition – we can detect the loosening of the ties which used to relate and separate people. The modern experience of uprootedness deprives human beings of a sense of belonging by treating the world as a disposable and transitional site rather than a dwelling place. Second, therefore, the capacity to love is weakening if not altogether disappearing because the world is turning into a loosened ground, a desert, and the human capability to establish relationships with the world and others is challenged. In this context, I highlight the significance of Arendt's metaphor of the desert and the oasis as a symbol which distinctively illustrates how human beings create a legacy on the earth of "philosophy, art, and the affection of love and friendship."²⁷¹ I shall try to demonstrate how Arendt metaphorized her understanding of the modern loss of lovers with the images of desert and oasis, linking back to the existential-ontological concern of the more profound yet less discussed notion – the loss

²⁷⁰ Augustine's Christian brotherhood of man was built for the purpose of a transcendental other-worldliness, and this mundane, secular world is at the disposal of *caritas*.

²⁷¹ SCHOONHEIM, L. 2018. Among Lovers: Love and Personhood in Hannah Arendt. *Arendt Studies*, 2, 99–124. p.114.

of the human.

In section 3, I shall demonstrate that *amor mundi* is a contradiction in terms because it harbours the tension between withdrawal and belonging, which opens up an interpretive space from within which we can gain a perspective of Arendt's understanding of the human. In this regard, the core of the tension in *amor mundi* is the existence of boundaries which enclose lovers within a common ground whilst separating them apart from others. To fully appreciate the transcendental dimension of human being, we therefore need to recognize the importance of drawing boundaries.

In the final section, I shall examine the significance of Arendt's claim that "to be human and to be free are one and the same", which contextualizes what she meant by *amor mundi* (BPF, 166). What nourishes the transcending capacity of freedom is the "darkness of the human heart",²⁷² 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. In view of this, in Arendt's political writing, 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. So I shall I try to demonstrate how *amor mundi* names the ineffable human experiences of tending and caring for the world.

²⁷² I identify a less-discussed notion which Arendt borrowed from Christian tradition, the darkness of human heart, a rather mystified, imaginary place which refuses any scientific inspection and only a phenomenological gaze is allowed, I think.

4.1 The Origin: Augustine and Heidegger

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.

Admittedly, 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. To be human is to love. 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" (LA, 20).²⁷³ However, 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".²⁷⁴ 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.²⁷⁵

Augustine traced the origin of mortal existence back to its immortal source (LA, 50). For Augustine, the "meaningfulness of human existence" was

²⁷³ Love is a desire, *appetitus*, "the existential link between isolated individual and the rest of reality." (LA, 20).

²⁷⁴ Indeed, 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).

²⁷⁵ On the other hand, from the theological and Christian perspective, the inner spiritual world and the revelation of God are the highest good and final end of our ephemeral life. With the discovery of an inner world and the building of a spiritual reification Church, what Augustine did was actually isolating men from each other, creating a total lonely spirit walking in the world and collectively rushing toward the afterlife as the Church promised. The isolated and unrelated human beings are cast away from their dwelling place, their real home called earth; rather, they are looking beyond and anticipating the other world.

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" (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.²⁷⁶ 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" (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 thyself".²⁷⁷ According to traditional understanding since

²⁷⁶ 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).

²⁷⁷ What Arendt underscored was this freedom to love anyone we choose to love, rather than being commanded to 'love your neighbour'. This freedom is now here 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.

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.²⁷⁸ This corresponds to the Platonic two-world distinction between the mundane world of temporal things and the transcendental world of enduring things.²⁷⁹ Second, the instrumental reasoning catches upon the crux of the otherworldliness when

²⁷⁸ 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.

²⁷⁹ JASPERS, K. 1957. *Plato and Augustine*, US, A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace & Company.p. 30.

Augustine replaces the maker with God as the Creator of all creatures.²⁸⁰ 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.²⁸¹ In sum, the world, including the makers of the world, appears disposable. 282

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.²⁸³

²⁸⁰ 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.

²⁸¹ 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*.

²⁸² JASPERS, K. 1957. *Plato and Augustine*, US, A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace & Company. (66). According to Jaspers, “Plotinus helped him to take the great step: to discern a purely spiritual reality and cast off the fetters of mere corporeal existence.”

²⁸³ SCOTT, J. V. 2010. What St. Augustine Taught Hannah Arendt about “how to live in the world”: *Caritas*,

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 section, 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).²⁸⁴ 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

Natality and the Banality of Evil. In: 2010, M. O. E. (ed.) *Hannah Arendt: Practice, Thought and Judgement*. Studies across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences 8.

Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. 8–27. Particularly, Augustinian love of the world is distinguished from and circumscribed by love of the neighbour.

²⁸⁴ *Das nackte Das* *sim Nichts der Welt* – “the naked That in the Nothingness of the world.”

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 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.²⁸⁵ 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.²⁸⁶ 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" (106-107). 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 metaphysical tradition with which Heidegger took issue: "an otherless, isolated 'I'".²⁸⁷ 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

²⁸⁵TAMBOUKOU, M. 2013. Love, Narratives, Politics: Encounters between Hannah Arendt and Rosa Luxemburg. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 30, 35–56.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.* See also "Since our expectations and desires are prompted by what we remember and guided by a previous knowledge, it is memory and not expectation (for instance the expectation of death as in Heidegger's approach) that gives unity and wholeness to human existence" (LA, 56).

²⁸⁷ KING, M. 1964. *Heidegger's Philosophy: A Guide to his Basic Thought*, Macmillan.

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).²⁸⁸

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 envioning world (as was discussed in Chapter 3). 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 love: her analysis of Augustine's paradox of neighbourly love and her understanding of Heidegger's phenomenological

²⁸⁸ The bridge linking the self and the other is called 'empathy' [*Einfuehlung*], which is also a presupposition that "Dasein's Being towards an Other is its Being towards itself." "Only on the basis of Being-with does 'empathy' become possible: it gets its motivation from the unsociability of the dominant modes of Being-with."

solution through care, death and self. In providing an 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*. In other words, to objectify the world from a subjective point of view is a problem which could result, as Arendt later interpreted it, in the world in becoming a desert. In the following section, I shall demonstrate, through Arendt's metaphorical analysis of the desertification of the world, her genuine concern for the modern loss of the lovers in the situation which she called 'worldlessness'.

4.2 The modern loss of lovers

In the modern labouring and consuming society, the old theological pursuit of transcendence is further downgraded from a level of faith to a level of spiritual food to assuage the hunger of a particular existential anxiety, as was discussed in Chapter 1. Today, the transcendental pursuit beyond basic needs does not go away with the death of God (the supreme transcendental entity). We still have some higher needs such as beauty, truth and goodness. However, as long as human beings are always searching beyond or outside their own existence, and as long as man is trying to make the world inhabitable, the world "keeps its original strangeness". Lovers' estrangement from the world expresses the world as disposable when human life on earth is just a brief sojourn prior to an otherworldly destination.²⁸⁹

According to Arendt's diagnosis, the particular relevance of the modern

²⁸⁹ With similar pathos, see KOHN, J. 2018. Hannah Arendt: The Appearances of Estrangement. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 85, 301-321., where Jerome Kohn carefully discusses what he means by the "estrangement from the world", and discerns the difference between 'estrangement' and 'alienation'. Kohn offers his profound insight that it is not the world which is estranged from us, but ourselves as human beings are abandoning the world – "the world into which we come as new comers from now here." p. 304.

world is that the world is to be used (*uti*) as a means to some end, such as the immortality of mankind, rather than enjoyed (*frui*) as from sense experiences (LA, 33).²⁹⁰ The instrumentalization, Arendt warned, could only result in the “limitless devaluation of everything existing”, degrading “nature and the world into mere means, robbing both of their independent dignity” (*ibid.*) The dependency in finding the creature of human existence expresses a “particular strangeness in which the world as a desert pre-exists for man” (*ibid.*). In that case, man has no control, no power, and no sovereignty over the world.

As discussed in section 2.4, thinking with metaphor is to create “its own ‘concepts’ out of the visible, to designate the invisible” (DTB, XXVI.30:728). I argue that in describing what she observed in the modern world, Arendt used the metaphor of the desert to describe her concern for the modern loss of lovers. For Arendt, the world was turning into a desert and the desert was not in ourselves but it spreads between us: the withering away of everything which is in-between. According to Arendt, the desert was first recognized as well as mistakenly diagnosed by Nietzsche, who thought that “the desert is *in* ourselves” as if there is something terribly wrong within ourselves. Because of this misdiagnosis, Nietzsche ended up being among the first conscious inhabitants of that desert and the first victim of the most terrible illusion (PP, 201). As a cure, modern psychology created the illusion in response to the desert world according to Nietzsche’s prescription. Modern psychology is dedicated to helping and adjusting the human mind to acclimatize to the living conditions of the desert and to make ourselves at home in the desert. Most detrimentally, however, modern psychology trains human beings into becoming inhabitants of the desert and turns them into devising the most powerful weapon which destroys everything – totalitarianism. It is precisely this adjustment of our internal condition to adapt to the external desert condition which turns

²⁹⁰ In fact, the distinction between a love of use and a love of “fulfillment and end of desire” best describes the political implication of the Augustinian legacy.

everything topsy-turvy (PP, 202).

Elsewhere in *The Life of the Mind*, Arendt explicitly rejected the psychological approach to dealing with the problem of real world. For Arendt, psychology as a discipline of science was a contradiction in terms. Just as physiology and medicine presuppose the sameness of the inner organs, psychology presupposes the sameness of each psyche. But if this were true, that is, if everyone's psychic condition were precisely the same, psychology as science would be meaningless and useless (LM, I:34). To challenge the credibility of psychology, Arendt pointed out the strange symbiotic phenomenon of the oases of human creativity which, for most of the time, are worldless in nature as they demonstrate "what [we] can do and create insofar as we exist in the singular", such as the isolated virtuosity of the artist, the lonely business of the philosopher and the "inherently worldless relationship between human beings" as it exists in love and friendship (PP, 202). In contrast, for Arendt, what constituted the oasis were "art, philosophy, love and friendship". The life-giving oases, from my perspective, are the most human activities which constantly provide life in the desert. As I see it, the metaphor of the desert depicts the very worst drought of the modern world, which is caused by the loss of the human. In that case, the task of political theorists is to protect the oases of art, philosophy, love and friendship, as well as to cultivate and educate artists, philosophers, lovers and friends who are rendered useless in a world of desert. After all, for Arendt, the problem was never a psychological one, but at matter "of how to live in the world".²⁹¹

The scenario of the world as desert reminds us of Arendt's existential anxiety about nobodyness. In the desert, human beings – men and women, children and the old, rich and poor – come and go. If we fast-forward the motion

²⁹¹ SCOTT, J. V. 2010. What St. Augustine Taught Hannah Arendt about "how to live in the world": Caritas, Natality and the Banality of Evil. In: 2010, M. O. E. (ed.) *Hannah Arendt: Practice, Thought and Judgement. Studies across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences* 8. Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. 8–27.

picture as quickly as possible, all we get is a desert standing still, lifeless and void. Love of the world, in view of this, is unattainable since human existence is incapable of leaving traces behind in these conditions because there is nobody to witness them.

I therefore contend that in this peculiar context, *amor mundi* is understood as a human artifact whose potential immortality is always subject to the mortality of those inhabitants who come to live in the desert, and those who build and care for the world. The oases are not for relaxation, but are life-giving sources which accommodate human beings in the desert without being reconciled to it (PP, 203). Without the oases, Arendt warned us, “we would not know how to breathe” (PP, 202). In other words, human beings as somebody are sources of the life-sustaining or life-giving oases in this desert. In this regard, I agree with Kristeva’s interpretation of Arendt’s political narrative that we could immortalize ourselves by becoming a ‘who’ by acting in the political space.²⁹² In this respect, to protect the oases is to protect the treasure of what is needed for us to be human at all, because the desert would dry up into nobodyness, threatening to destroy the world (PP, 204).

I therefore argue that within Arendt’s political writings there are two interrelated aspects of the modern loss of lovers: first, the binding power of the world which enables lovers of the world to thrive (including artists, philosophers and friends), and thereby second, the human capability to love, to form a binding power to world; in other words to build and care for a world. First, in the modern labouring and consuming society, the binding power which relates lovers of the world is not tight enough to connect and establish a constructive relationship which allows human beings as lovers to be. Consequently, second, the capability to love is weakening. After all, only by delight in the world (*dilectio mundi*) can human beings make the world their home. And the man-built world

²⁹² KRISTEVA, J. 2001. *Hannah Arendt: Life is a Narrative*, trans. COLLINS, F., University of Toronto Press. p. 19.

is constituted both by tangible artifacts (schools, hospitals, bridges) and by an intangible legacy (music, literature, art). This strangeness toward the world of our own making does not make us lovers of the world: the world is not only not eternal, it never exists for its own sake, and worse still, man's proper attitude to the world is not one of enjoyment but use (LA, 167), otherwise, the world would become a desert and human beings would find themselves abandoned in the world.

Indeed, more and more conceptual analyses of love in Arendtian study, in both the depth and width of topics, shows that love of the world might prevent us from appreciating the existential ontological message which Arendt wished to convey. The message, as it would be, is carried within *amor mundi* through the conceptual tension which characteristically and intrinsically lies between love and world.²⁹³ The information sent by Arendt must be different from her own critical reading of the Augustinian idea of neighbourly love. That is to say, because of its complexity, the message is not simply a slogan or another divine commandment from God demanding that human beings love their fellow men unconditionally. Placing and orienting *amor mundi* within Augustine's model of divine givenness is therefore factually as well as theoretically impossible. Also, this impossibility is enhanced in what Arendt intensively critiqued as the neighbourly love in the dialectic of *caritas* and *cupiditas*. In order to retain a place for neighbourly love in Augustine, Arendt put the puzzle into an altogether different context which is pre-religious: secular law rather than a divine command for "not doing to others what we would not have them to do us" (LA, 38-39).

Some scholars try to distil a political dimension out of worldly love. The most typical example is Shin Chiba, who sought to show how love is compatible with and even complementary to the political. To this purpose, Chiba listed various modes of love from ancient Greece to medieval Christianity in order to

²⁹³ Both concepts are significantly crucial for us to gain access to Arendt's understanding of human.

pave the way for a justification of the ambiguity of love's anti-political or unpolitical character.²⁹⁴ For Chiba, there are naturalistic and artificial dimensions of life. The public bond and political identity is searched through the artificial world. Artificial life is related to something man can cultivate and make. The artificial side of love is the objective love. Antipolitical love is therefore a subjective sentimental feeling whilst objective political love is two-fold: friendship (Aristotle's *philia*) and the ancient love for earthly immortality (Plato's *eros*). Objective love best illustrates that *amor mundi* has the potential to function in bonding a group of people and forming a political community, according to Chiba.

Others have focused on the ontological dimension of worldly love. For example, 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, but was re-configured by Arendt. For Arendt, transcendental love 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.²⁹⁵ Love has been examined as a human capacity with which we are born. Maria Tamboukou explored how Arendt's conceptualization of love was inspected through her acceptance of the Augustinian concept of memory and a philosophical analysis of the binding forces of the human faculties of thinking, willing and judging.²⁹⁶ According to Andrea Ney, love is not one of the political virtues but "plays an indirect role in preparing us to forgive and promise".²⁹⁷ Almost instinctively, Nye glimpsed that love is involved in determining a specific 'who', instead of 'what' somebody is. That is to say, the 'whoness' is essential

²⁹⁴ CHIBA, S. 1995. Hannah Arendt on Love and the Political: Love, Friendship, and Citizenship. *The Review of Politics*, 57, 505-535. There are modes of love such as "Plato's notion of *eros*, Aristotle's formulation of *philia*, Cicero's notion of *amicitia*, and Augustine's notion of *amor* or *caritas*." p. 509.

²⁹⁵ YOUNG-BRUEHL, E. & ARENDT, H. 2004. *For Love of the World*, Yale University Press New Haven London. p. 76.

²⁹⁶ TAMBOUKOU, M. 2013. Love, Narratives, Politics: Encounters between Hannah Arendt and Rosa Luxemburg. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 30, 35-56.

²⁹⁷ NYE, A. 1994. *Philosophia: the thought of Rosa Luxemburg, Simone Weil, and Hannah Arendt*, New York, Routledge. p. 258, n. 35.

for promising and forgiving in regard to the vision of a specific lover. More essential, I believe, is that love is the power to let go of the past and embrace the future.

Scholars have realised and demonstrated the ambiguous nature of the conceptual tension between the political and ontological dimensions of Arendt's notion of love of the world. As Tamboukou suggested, "love for Arendt is configured as a *fort-da* movement that human beings fly away from and return to the world".²⁹⁸ Likewise, Lauren Barthold emphasized Arendt's particular struggle between a withdrawal from and a return to the world.²⁹⁹ Undoubtedly there is a dynamic relationship between men and the world and love is the relational term in-between. As an undying craving, love craves an object which we do not have or always fear losing.³⁰⁰ Thus, love of the world always denotes that we can never have a world or that we are constantly losing the world no matter how we try to keep it. As discussed above, love, as either *cupiditas* or *caritas*, is an undying craving, a desire or appetite for an object. Once we have that object, we stop wanting it but always feel the threat of losing it.³⁰¹ It therefore seems that the concept of *amor mundi* puts us into a very awkward situation because it begs the question of whether it is possible to love the world.

Building on the previous scholarship, I bring together the political and ontological differences and retain the paradoxical tension of *amor mundi* in an attempt to reconceptualize it by imitating the Augustinian format of the paradox of neighbourly love (to have neighbours and love them) through Heidegger's critique of the structural problem of analysing the relationship between human

²⁹⁸ TAMBOUKOU, M. 2013. Love, Narratives, Politics: Encounters between Hannah Arendt and Rosa Luxemburg. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 30, 35–56.

²⁹⁹ BARTHOLD, L. S. 2000. Towards an Ethics of Love Arendt on the Will and St Augustine. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 26, 1-20. Barthold sought to formulate an ethics of love via the Augustinian dilemma between love of the god and love of the neighbour in order to solve the problem of the will and to prevent a person from doing evil. As Barthold suggested, "Arendt relies on an Augustinian conception of the will in order to address both the problem of evil and also the infamous philosophical fallacy that the mind, as a place of inner withdrawal, stands superior, as well as separate from, the world, which is external."

³⁰⁰ *ibid.*, Arendt called this fulfillment of craving or desire "the end of love".

³⁰¹ *ibid.*

beings and the world. Thus I unpack the term *amor mundi* into questioning the possibility of loving the world: to have a world and to love the world. Intriguingly relevant, corresponding to the fading horizon and numbing senses of modern loss of the world discussed at length in Chapter 3; similarly, the modern loss of lovers is two-fold; first we lose the ability to love as we find no entrance into the world because, second, the world will close itself from our sense organs. In the following section, I shall show that *amor mundi* itself is a contradiction in terms and a paradox in definition, even though the conceptual structure of *amor mundi* creates a theoretical tension, if not a flaw in the logic, which could be stretched out as an interpretive space.

4.3 *Amor mundi*: the paradoxical tension

As hinted above, in order to answer the question of the very possibility of *amor mundi*, I suggest that it is necessary to distinguish between and bring together the ontological and political claims regarding Arendt's notion of the human capacity of worldly love. In this section, I shall de-construct the term *amor mundi* in the light of Michael Ferguson's suggestion that the world which humans build and sustain together is to be shared, and that first-hand experience of the world is not particularly demonstrable or sharable.³⁰² Adopting and adapting this insight, I shall then re-conceptualize the paradoxical tension of *amor mundi* by referring to Arendt's writing in an attempt to justify the significance of the boundaries which must and can be demonstrable and sharable between lovers. 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.

³⁰² FERGUSON, M. L. 2012. Sharing the World in Common with Others. *Sharing Democracy* [Online]. Ferguson discussed Arendt's critical engagement with Little Rock High School in 1957.

The distinction between the ontological and political claims about love was hinted at by Arendt, I believe. In the following section, 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, 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 Arendt gave a hint about love's two-fold nature: rarity and a "powerful antipolitical human force". In this regard, *amor mundi* is a contradiction in terms as the conceptual analysis and textual evidence show. Love is as unworldly as it is unpolitical. 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 which Arendt gave is her concern for the logical impossibility of *amor mundi*, which 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 asked her:

As a politically active being, doesn't man need commitment to a group, a commitment that can then to a certain extent be called love? Are you not afraid that your attitude could be politically sterile? (EU, 16)

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.³⁰³ 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”.³⁰⁴ 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. Indeed, 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. I am born, so to speak, an Oriental woman, as ethnically or politically categorized or classified. 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

³⁰³ See also CASSIN, B. 2016a. Arendt: To Have One’s Language for a Homeland. *Nostalgia: When Are we Ever at Home?* : Fordham University.

³⁰⁴ ARENDT, H. 2007. *Reflections on Literature and Culture*, Stanford, California, Standford University Press. p.19.

with and the *Es weltet* I comport myself around.³⁰⁵ I am more than ready to know other persons, to know different people with diverse origins and cultures. The more people I encounter, the more worlds I come into contact with, and therefore, the further my world as a human being expands.

In this regard, I argue that boundaries are necessary to sustain the tension within *amor mundi* because love is a relational term, “since where there is love there is also a lover and a beloved”, and love is a particular life which joins the two.³⁰⁶ Yet, relation-establishing is 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”.³⁰⁷ 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. It should be noted, however, the bounded walls are to be differentiated from what Arendt meant by public space or the space for appearances, which are unbounded because they constitute the life-giving oasis with unlimited potentiality.

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

³⁰⁵ See also, CASSIN, B. 2016a. Arendt: To Have One’s Language for a Homeland. *Nostalgia: When Are we Ever at Home?* : Fordham University.

³⁰⁶ BURNELL, P. 2005. Humanitas. *The Augustinian Person*. Catholic University of America Press. p. 119.

³⁰⁷ Quoted from BOYM, S. 2009. From Love to Worldliness: Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger. *Yearbook of Comparative Literature*, 55, 106-128.. This originally appeared in Georg Simmel’s, ‘Eros Platonic and Modern’ in *On Individuality and Social Forms*. Donald Levine (ed.) University of Chicago Press, 1971: 245-46.

institutions that people can realize in the world.

Fences and barriers 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 fences carry the "opponents into provenance of their unity" by virtue of a common ground. By drawing the boundaries and fences, the rift does not break the opponents apart but brings them into measuring, drawing and sharing a common frontier line (OWA, 188).³⁰⁸ 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 *riff* 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. 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 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. Interaction is the origin of the renewing world and the renewing world is the reason why we are attracted

³⁰⁸ 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 upsurge 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."

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”.³⁰⁹ 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”.³¹⁰

Many Arendtian readers agree with this. As Chiba noted, 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,³¹¹ constitutes the essential ingredient of *amor mundi* – we like to know people who are “different, diversified and heterogeneous”.³¹² 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.

³⁰⁹ JACKSON, M. D. 2009. Where Thought Belongs: An Anthropological Critique of the Project of Philosophy. *Anthropological Theory*, 9, 235–251. “Understanding others,” for Michael Jackson, “requires more than an intellectual movement from one’s own position to theirs; it involves physical upheaval, psychological turmoil, and moral confusion.” p. 238.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 239.

³¹¹ See ALLISON, W. 2017. Collective Love as Public Freedom: Dancing Resistance. Ehrenreich, Arendt, Kristeva, and Idle No More. *Hypatia*, 32, 19-34.

³¹² CHIBA, S. 1995. Hannah Arendt on Love and the Political: Love, Friendship, and Citizenship. *The Review of Politics*, 57, 505-535. P. 534.

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 (BW, 135).³¹³ 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 has rightly 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).³¹⁴ 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 transitional 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

³¹³ "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."

³¹⁴ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. pp. 146-7.

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).³¹⁵ “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’.³¹⁶ For

³¹⁵ Before the ultimate actualization of death, Dasein is always lingering a while in the present, as Arendt summarized it, between “the coming and going, appearing and disappearing, of beings” which always “begins with a disclosure that is an *ent-bergen*, the loss of the original shelter (*bergen*) that had been granted by Being; the being then ‘lingers for a while’ in the ‘brightness’ of disclosure, and ends by returning to the sheltering shield of Being in its concealment.” MAIER-KATKIN, D. 2010b. *Stranger from abroad: Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, friendship, and forgiveness*, New York, W.W. Norton. p. 50, 344.

³¹⁶ Demonstrably, Arendt’s debt to Heidegger’s idea of *Gelassenheit* (*laissez 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*.

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.

It is nevertheless worth highlighting that what I designate as boundaries and fences in the rest of this chapter do not have their literal meanings as these words politically or socially indicate. The boundaries and fences 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 reconstructed as recognition, in a cognitive sense, of the natural or anthropological differences, such as different ancestors or culture.³¹⁷ 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' walls and fences which are forcefully imposed upon us, by expelling and excluding, for example stateless persons.³¹⁸ Taking this into consideration, to some extent I therefore distance

³¹⁷ 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.

³¹⁸ As such, as advised by my external examiner Gareth Williams, those boundaries are often and rightly the object of contestation and revision. For example, as the United States struggled to redraw the boundaries which excluded black people from (full) citizenship. Here, I thank my examiners, Gareth

myself from Arendt's own texts. The use of barriers and fences in this chapter 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, barriers and fences are shared, as a common ground, as a third something, as an ontological determination.

To comprehend the significance of fences and barriers in our understanding of the paradoxical tension in Arendt's notion of worldly love, we might need to bring another relevant topic into our discussion: the Arendt/Heidegger relationship. Svetlana Boym depicted a lovescape in both thinkers with a pair of geographical or spatial metaphors: transcendental (as vertical) and horizontal, claiming a horizontal rather than transcendental common world. Boym understood Arendt's conception of a common world as an unpredictable "third something" created by the experience of love, which breeds the possibility of a "form of passionate thinking, understanding of differences, and public imagination" (106). To understand the lovescape between Arendt and Heidegger in comparison with a landscape in architecture and scenography, Boym showed us a rather different way of understanding their relationship, which surprisingly does not rely on "transparency, revelation or dark sovereignty", but rather on "luminosity and shadowplay, on pluralities and differences" (107). Instead of being transcendental and vertical, a landscape designating a hierarchical, overpowering relationship, the lovescape between Arendt and Heidegger is horizontal, which shows us an equal, dialogical and loving relationship which nurtures the possibility of a common world. The common world is not possible without the boundaries, the fences and barriers, which allow an independent third something for us to see the shining brightness and let us appear; the horizons of a common world and the

Williams and James Muldoon, for helping me realise that I made a mistake before this version. I did confuse two levels of reading of *amor mundi*. I began with *amor mundi* as human experiences, but I ended up arguing and legitimizing how fences and barriers can be built and protected only through the state apparatus as if to protect the boundary lines is to protect our loving ones..

planes of a public space.³¹⁹

Similarly, the perspective from which Iain Thomson depicted the Heidegger/Arendt biographical relationship was a model of regarding their romantic love as an “ontological event”. What is mysteriously given or articulated in the unconditional model of love, as Thomson discovered, is inherently based on something called *je ne sais quoi*. Very clichéd but true, this mysterious *je ne sais quoi* stands in contrast with the modes of properties (or values) which lovers require from each other as shown in the perfectionist type of love. Thus, Thomson recommended a third alternative model of thinking love – an ontological model of love – which existed between Arendt and Heidegger. As an approach to what existed between them, thinking love as an ontological event transcends the other two problematic, arbitrary and contingent models of love. Their love was ontologically rooted and affirmed as “the lifelong struggle to disclose the possibilities both revealed and concealed in the event of love – love brings both human beings and being itself into their own together”, according to Thomson. Given this discussion, I maintain that fences and barriers are erected not only between rivals but also between lovers.

To conclude, harking back to Heidegger’s concept of care (*sorge*) as a temporal dimension of human relationships (*fursorge*), we could plausibly define the human capacity of worlding (building and caring) through loving. 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 fences and barriers 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.

³¹⁹ BOYM, S. 2009. From Love to Worldliness: Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger. *Yearbook of Comparative Literature*, 55, 106-128.

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.

4.4 Loving: the 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'être* 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. 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).³²⁰ Arendt urged us to shift our attention away from the self to care for the world.³²¹ Compared with the “enormous variety and richness of overt human conduct”, what is happening inside could be monotonously the same and pervasively ugly.³²² (LM, I:34-35).

The darkness of the human heart is not just a metaphor through which Arendt understood human emotions³²³ 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

³²¹ Also, according to 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*.

³²² 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.

³²³ DEGERMAN, D. 2019. Within the Heart’s Darkness: The Role of Emotions in Arendt’s Political Thought. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 18, 153-173.

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.³²⁴

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. 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 an inseparable from the self as the human darkness. In this regard, this hiddenness is the essential unlimited source of our human existence.

Modern friendship is characterized, inwardly, by a private dimension; but it can cross into other spheres and turn outward and therefore become public, as Arendt would say,³²⁵ because friendship, as a mode of love, is an exception which emerges from and surpasses the twofold darkness of both private life and the human heart. According to Nixon, Arendt's relative reticence in analysing friendship as a concept was because she did friendship as "a necessary condition for survival".³²⁶ In other words, she was less interested in

³²⁴ ALLISON, W. 2017. Collective Love as Public Freedom: Dancing Resistance. Ehrenreich, Arendt, Kristeva, and Idle No More. *Hypatia*, 32, 19-34. Such is the ontological foundation of Arendt's conception of love that we could trace its origin and metamorphosis from Heidegger.

³²⁵ SINGER, B. C. J. 2017. Thinking Friendship With and Against Hannah Arendt. *Critical Horizons*, 93-118. Thus, Singer distinguishes between friendship among ancients, political friendship in dark times, non-political friendship among the modern as social and intimate.

³²⁶ NIXON, J. 2015b. *Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Friendship*, London, Bloomsbury Academic. p. 160.

what friendship is than in the conditions necessary for friendship – continuity, duty and impartiality – which combined, “enable us to survive and flourish as human beings.”³²⁷ The precondition of friendship involves a considerable investment of time and money; to use McCarthy’s term, a particular amount of ‘workmanlike’ activities are necessarily required because friendship is a commitment to routine and maintenance (HC, 159).³²⁸ With a similar practical instead of theoretical ground, Brian Singer interrogated the weaknesses and strengths of Arendt’s different notions of friendship in order to construct a more plural understanding of friendship, especially in a time which is not that dark. He found that friendship was considered as a political ideal, the core of the web of human relationships, since it needed not to be merely private for Arendt but plays an important role in worldliness.

Similar to friendship, moreover, 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 (HC, 168).³²⁹ 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

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

³²⁸ In Nixon’s interpretation, Arendt’s relationship with Heidegger was her struggle for recognition, with her husband was more of an instrumental one both in intellectual inspiration and emotional security, with Jaspers was primary but by no means world-oriented, and with McCarthy was a prime narrative but did not achieve as intersubjective understanding.

³²⁹ “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.”

cognition or imagination” or “could not be known” (HC, 150).

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 (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.³³⁰ 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).³³¹

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 (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.³³² 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:

³³⁰ See also, INGRAM, D. 1988. The Postmodern Kantianism of Arendt and Lyotard. *The Review of Metaphysics*, 42, 51-77.

³³¹ 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.

³³² “Freedom as related to politics is not a phenomenon of the will.” (150)

“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'être* 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 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”.³³³

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 fences and barriers 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 guilty 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

³³³ ALLISON, W. 2017. Collective Love as Public Freedom: Dancing Resistance. Ehrenreich, Arendt, Kristeva, and Idle No More. *Hypatia*, 32, 19-34.

“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”.³³⁴ 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 possible redemption from the predicament of irreversibility
– of being unable to undo what one has done though one did

³³⁴ NYE, A. 1994. *Philosophia: the thought of Rosa Luxemburg, Simone Weil, and Hannah Arendt*, New York, Routledge. p. 258, n. 35.

not, and could not, have known what he was doing – is the faculty of forgiving. The remedy for unpredictability, for the chaotic uncertainty of the future, is contained in the faculty to make and keep promises. (HC, 237)

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 mastery” 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, I believe. (HC, 235, n. 74)

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), ³³⁵ and

³³⁵ “The basic unreliability of men who never can guarantee today who they will be tomorrow, and out of the impossibility of foretelling the consequences of an act within a community of equals where everybody

the spuriously claimed sovereignty by an isolated single entity – be it a person or 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 fences and barriers 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).

Respect is a kind of friendship without intimacy and closeness, and an admiration from afar of a person with distinct qualities or achievements: the “Modern loss of respect ... constitutes a clear symptom of the increasing depersonalization of public and social life” (HC, 243). We only show our respect for the person, and this is “sufficient to prompt our forgiving of what a person did” just for the sake of who the person is. 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

has the same capacity to act. Man’s inability to rely upon himself or to have faith in himself ... is the price human beings pay for freedom; and the impossibility of remaining unique masters of what they do, of knowing its consequences and relying upon the future, is the price they pay for plurality and reality, for the joy of inhabiting together with others a world whose reality is guaranteed for each by the presence of all.”

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 unequalled 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).³³⁶ In this regard, the human world transcends the man-made

³³⁶ This is a quotation which Arendt translated and cited from Augustine’s *Homilies on the First of John* II, 12.

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 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 chapter, I have demonstrated how love is the capability to world and the sense in which loving is part of the meta-dimension of human beings. I have demonstrated Arendt’s indebtedness to two sources, Augustinian love and Heidegger’s philosophy of care. I have understood the modern loss of the lovers with the help of Arendt’s metaphor of oasis, and I have tried to depict how the loosened binding forces of the world which enable human capability to thrive could in turn build a resilient space which could both connect and separate lovers. Within the desert, she still retained the oasis of love, friendship, art and philosophy – the most human of human things. I have also reconceptualized Arendt’s concept of *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. From the theological and philosophical vantage points, the world is a desert since both treat the world as transitory to some degree of transcendence which lies outside and beyond human existence. In the hermeneutic phenomenological sense, however, *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. This capacity of worldly love, I have argued, was a political *par excellence* for Arendt. In similar vein, in the next chapter, I shall consider the other ontological determination as the capability which Arendt transformed into a political *par excellence*: human speech.

5 Logos: The Capability to Speak

Modern visionary scientists and researchers have warned that there appears to be anxiety about the threat to human existence. Stephen Hawking, for instance, made the dire prediction that artificial intelligence (AI) will outperform and replace humans altogether one day in the future.³³⁷ Hannah Arendt was familiar with this futuristic angst; in fact, she worried that machines would eventually do our thinking and our speaking.³³⁸ In Arendt's view, the phenomenal world within which we move is being replaced by machine languages such as computer algorithms and mathematical symbols, which can never be "translated back into" human speech (HC, 3-4).

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how politics presents and protects the human capability to speak as a way of transcending. After all, for Arendt, the speech was the political capacity *par excellence* by repeatedly referring to Aristotle's two famous definition of man who is a political being, "endowed with the power of speech" (HC, 4; OR, 9). By saying this, I believe, Arendt is making two relevant claims: 1) the ontological claim that speaking is the most basic determination for us to be human at all and 2) the political claim that human speech is capable of building a space for appearance, establishing human relationship, experiencing meaningfulness and therefore to genuinely and authentically transcending/worlding (as a verb). The two claims are intertwined; for instance, in her eyes, Eichmann's inability to think, causes his lack of political and moral judgment and therefore his failure to be human at all.

To fully understand how human existence is affirmed by speech in Arendt's political thought, however, I turn to the pre-Aristotle conception of *logos*

³³⁷ This opinion is widely spread on the internet. "Computers can, in theory, emulate human intelligence, and exceed it." AI would be the "worst event in the history of our civilization. It brings dangers, like powerful autonomous weapons, or new ways for the few to oppress the many. It could bring great disruption to our economy", Hawking said.

³³⁸ In the era of data technology, human beings are wrapped up within an information cocoon, layered with our personal preferences to the extent that the more we know the more we don't know. By contrast, machines seem to have no limit to storing, filtering and processing data and knowledge. The information cocoon is a concept developed by Cass Sunstein describing how leaders are trapped and "shielded from information at odds with their preconceptions". SUNSTEIN, C. R. 2008. *Infotopia: How Many Minds Produce Knowledge*, New York; Oxford; Oxford University Press.

indirectly, through the lens of Heidegger. For Heidegger, albeit being a philosopher, gave more comprehensive analysis of the political (ethical and rhetorical) aspects of the Greek concept of *logos*, based on the existential ontology. For him, man speaks, thus he dwells. Human existence has been stamped with *logos* since Heraclitus, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, but the rich implications were overlooked by the metaphysical movement of enframing.

I argue, Arendt took Heidegger's retrieval of the existential ontological dimension of speech into her own phenomenological perception of the human. For instance, we know how speech, as comportment, creates a public realm as a very important index to the world of appearance. But we often ignore the fact that speaking also belongs to the acoustic, audible world – a meta dimension of human existence – no less important than the visible world. Besides, the urge to be heard (as a way of appearing) requires not only the sense organ of ears, but also “greater perfection of human cognition” (LM, I:110-111).

Thus, structurally, in the first section of this chapter, I shall therefore reconstruct Heidegger's retrieval of *logos* and demonstrate the divergence of *logos* into ‘logic’ and ‘human speech’. By highlighting the significance of Heidegger's idiosyncratic retrieval of *logos* from Greek antiquity as a process of moving from clarity to obscurity, I shall show that the downfall of *logos* is accompanied by the rise of logic.³³⁹ In doing so, I shall also demonstrate Heidegger's interpretation of the authentic experience and genuine understanding of *logos*, which simply describes the phenomenon of everyday affairs as we speak and talk to each other unthinkingly and ambiguously.³⁴⁰

³³⁹ Heidegger deliberately “blurs the actual distinction that Aristotle is making” by tracing backwards. ELDEN, S. 2005. Reading *Logos* as Speech: Heidegger, Aristotle and Rhetorical Politics. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 38, 281-301, *ibid.* p. 293. DAHLSTROM, D. 2001. The Scattered *Logos*: Metaphysics and the Logical Prejudice. *A Companion to Heidegger's 'Introduction to Metaphysics'*, 83-102. In particular circumstances, the introduction to metaphysics is an introduction to an ambiguity, Heidegger's retrieval of *logos* also headed toward the ambiguous, and indeed, “*deliberately* ambiguous”.

³⁴⁰ HEIDEGGER, M. 2003. *Plato's Sophist*, trans. SCHUWER, R. R. A. A., Bloomington: Indiana University Press. pp. 17-18. “*Legein*, ‘to speak,’ is what basically constitutes human Dasein. In speaking, it expresses itself, in the way, by speaking about something, about the world. This *legein* was for the Greeks so preponderant and such an everyday affair that they acquired their definition of man in relation to, and on the basis of, this phenomenon and thereby determined it as *zoon echon logon*.”

The obscurity which Heidegger wished to retrieve was the ‘non-sensible’ human experiences through which human beings are capable of having access to the transcendence as ineffableness.³⁴¹ For instance, the borderline experience of pain and joy.

Recall, the overall thesis examines the importance of politics as a way to present and protect the transcendental dimension of human existence. The guiding questions I therefore ask are: how do we humans, as mortal and finite beings, fathom meaning which is not derived from particular axiomatic truths or foundational tenets? How do we generate meaning by naming and presenting the ineffable without appealing to traditional metaphysics? How does human speech belong to the world of appearances? To answer these questions, my primary concern in this chapter is understanding what is at stake in the modern loss of speech, what prompts it, how is it carried out, and what remains to be considered in its wake. Thus, in the second section, I shall discuss Arendt’s observation and analysis of modern loss of speech as a true exigency and political crisis. In particular, I need to distinguish between the ability to speak and the power of speech. I shall show that, as a capability, speaking is constitutive for us to be human at all. However, speech can lose its power in the modern world. The subtle difference, I believe, is Arendt’s political interpretation of Heidegger’s distinction between logic and human speech.

In the third section, I shall therefore explore the dilemma of meaning regarding Arendt’s understanding of the concept of *logos*, which is prompted not “by the thirst for knowledge” but “by the quest for meaning” (LM, I:100). I shall further analyse the distinction between *logos* as logic, which pursues knowledge, and as human speech, which pursues meaning. Then, I shall introduce and discuss the significance of hermeneutics in showing a way out of this dilemma. I shall argue that human beings are capable of using words – the

³⁴¹ See “Logos” in HEIDEGGER, M. 1975a. *Early Greek Thinking*, trans. KRELL, D. & CAPUZZI, F., Harper & Row New York. Heidegger wrote that “the saying is rather an assertion about the equal participation of both in the realm of the *nonsensible*” p.73.

carriers of meaning – in order to name, fathom and present the world of appearances by simply living in the world. In this way, meaning may not necessarily be borrowed from above or outside human existence, but can be self-generated.

In the final section, I shall show how, for Arendt, human speech belongs to the realm of phenomenon while allowing humans to transcend the linguistic obstacles through the capability to create with words and metaphors. I shall therefore highlight those capacities which are essential to the power of human speech – hearing and listening – in the realm of human affairs and the world of appearances. I shall conclude by identifying three aspects of *logos* which enable humans to transcend: the speechless wonder, the capacity to speak, and the urge to be heard. All three aspects are indispensably constitutive for human beings to world and precisely problematize and respond to the modern loss of speech.

5.1 Heidegger's retrieval of *logos*

For Heidegger, although there was nothing wrong with the Latin metaphysical translation/interpretation of the Greek *zoon logon echon* into *animal rationale*; it is problematic only because it is conditioned by the metaphysical limited interpretation:³⁴²

Man is considered to be an *animal rationale*. This definition is not simply the Latin translation of the Greek *zoon logon echon* but rather a metaphysical interpretation of it. This essential definition of man is not false. But it is conditioned by metaphysics. The essential provenance of metaphysics, and not just its limits, became questionable in *Being and Time*. What is questionable is above all commanded to thinking as what is to be thought, but not at all left to the growing doubts of an empty scepticism. (LH, 226)

³⁴² By cutting off the originally rich meaning into a flat plain term, metaphysically modern man can determine the *ratio* of the *animal*, or the reason of living.

In this section, I shall reconstruct the story which Heidegger told of the downfall of *logos* as primitive human speech and the rise of logic as modern technology. I shall then consider Heidegger's reading of Heraclitus in order to flip around the rights and wrongs of logic in human thinking and speaking.

Heidegger's retrieval of *logos* was a journey from clarity to obscurity because for him, western thought was accomplished when the Greeks dissociated *logos* from *mythos*. The original primitive attempts had sought to trace the origin of *logos* from the remnants of mythical representation.³⁴³ Indeed, in Heidegger's view, the Greeks dwelt in the essential determination of language but never thought about it. It is therefore the naturalness of *logos* within which the ancient Greeks dwelt which motivated Heidegger into retrieving the pre-metaphysical obscurity of *logos*. The obscurity of *logos* therefore originates from the primitive encounter with the world before we could differentiate between what is presentable and what is mythical. According to Heidegger, the "inner gravity" of the essence of *logos* determines the "authentically obscure". The obscurity can be the torchlight which "drives toward darkness" or the shining "brightness that keeps to itself", or can vacillate between the two.³⁴⁴ Instead of the obscurity as confusion which leads to indecision, the authentic obscurity is the brightness which suspends but also ignites the essence of human existence. In searching for the light of obscurity, Heidegger retrieved *logos* from Heraclitus, whose thinking was "authentically obscure" in contrast with the philosophy of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Equivalently, Heidegger's retrieval of *logos* helps us to understand Arendt's concept of the human since the authentic obscurity of the *logos* reminds us of the ineffable dimension of human experiences, which I designate as the transcendental determination of being human.

For pre-Socratic philosophers in general, *logos* as *legein* was prior to all

³⁴³ HEIDEGGER, M. 1992. *Parmenides*, trans. André Schuwer and Richard Rojcewicz. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. pp. 5-6.

³⁴⁴ See Heidegger, *Heraclitus*.

profound metaphysical interpretations as reasoned speech or argument. (Heraclitus, 184) As Heidegger put it, *logos legein*: 'logos speaks'.³⁴⁵ This primitive interpretation recognizes the two things which *logos* accomplishes: naming and presenting.

First, *logos* as naming refers to the original primitive encounter with things. The Greek *legein*, a verb with the same stem as *logos*, means 'to speak', but it also has another meaning, 'to lay something down' (both things and ideas). Heidegger's pre-metaphysical interpretation of *legein* was 'to lay down' and 'lay before'. To lay down implies a kind of gathering, collecting and harvesting; it refers to naming for the first time: the "earliest and most consequential decision concerning the essence of language."³⁴⁶ Decision-making is the original process of naming as bringing light to obscurity: *legein* means talking and saying, and *logos* as *legein* is a saying aloud, and *legomenon* is what is said.

Second, *logos* as presenting describes the encounter with other human beings. To 'lay before' is also a kind of showing. For instance, civilized human beings know how to lay out the knives and forks on a table, or to lay out ideas, principles and plans, or to lay out arguments. Ideally, before we are even capable of comprehending a particular layout, *logos* as *legein* lets things lie 'before' us unreservedly and undisguisedly.³⁴⁷ What did Greeks do when they spoke? They talked to each other in the *polis* over things commonly shared with both understanding and interest. As the fundamental existential experience of public *polis* life, the ancient Greeks *legein* (in both the 'set out' and 'spoke about' meanings) everything in front of them: the authentic obscurity of brightness.³⁴⁸

The Greek thinker Heraclitus held the instinct that *logos* speaks naturally

³⁴⁵ See "Logos" in HEIDEGGER, M. 1975a. *Early Greek Thinking*, trans. KRELL, D. & CAPUZZI, F., Harper & Row New York. P. 70.

³⁴⁶ See Heidegger, "Logos" in *Early Greek Thinking*. pp. 61-53. "To lay is to gather [*lesen*]. The *lesen* better known to us, namely, the reading of something written, remains but one sort of gathering, in the sense of bringing-together-into-the-lying-before."

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁸ See Heidegger, "Logos" in *Early Greek Thinking*. p. 63. "Saying and talking occurs essentially as the letting-lie-together-before of everything which, laid in unconcealment, comes to presence."

non-sensibly and ineffably, whereas Socrates later regarded this ineffable aspect of *logos* as a kind of witchcraft, with mysterious supernatural power.³⁴⁹ Promising a superior use of *logos*, Socrates suggested that language ought to “accurately and proportionately describe reality”.³⁵⁰ In pursuit of precise knowledge, *logos* was developed into dividing and classifying.³⁵¹ Plato inherited Socrates’s fear of the bewitching mysterious power of speech. Believing in the truth-revealing function of *logos* which will eventually set man free from the bondage of the cave, Plato distinguished truth from opinion, the *eidos* (the ideal, the form) from its imitation.³⁵² In the Socratic-Platonic period, *logos* was pursued not for its supernatural power, but for its classifying function with scientific precision. The development of dialectical *logos* as knowledge seeking (logic) and rhetorical *logos* as the art of persuasion (human speech) began with Aristotle,³⁵³ whose analysis of rhetoric began with an inquiry: the biased realm of opinions may be of vital importance in the realm of human affairs.³⁵⁴

In Aristotle’s time, however, the Greeks “fell prey” to the language of sophistry which eventually become a mode of persuasion (BC, 136). Given that *legein* is the basic determination of humankind in its concrete mode of being in its everydayness (BC, 113), rhetoric should not be categorized into a *techne*, although it is *technikon*.³⁵⁵ That is to say, rhetoric is not an art, skill or know-

³⁴⁹ REAMES, R. 2012. The μῦθος of Pernicious Rhetoric: The Platonic Possibilities of λογός in Aristotle’s Rhetoric. *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, 30, 134-152. As Reames put it, “Socrates criticizes that rhetoric deals in argument from possibility and not truth, in belief and not knowledge, it is a knack and not a *techne*, a kind of flattery, deceit, and trickery”. And as Plato wrote in *Gorgias*, “So great, so strange, is the power of this art”.

³⁵⁰ *ibid.* “This dialectical dividing and classifying *logos*, as opposed to the rhetorical and poetical power-exploiting *logos*, is readily identifiable throughout the dialogues in the Socratic method of inquiry.”

³⁵¹ He only failed to do so when Socrates refused to defend himself in front of the Athenian populace because of his lack of belief, or maybe training, in rhetoric.

³⁵² For Plato, truth was the absolute, impeccable, highest Form; everything else is an imitation of the Form. Thus, imitation is fake, imperfect, with flaws, so is the *doxa*.

³⁵³ See Reames, 2012. Reames commented that “Heidegger insists explicitly that Aristotle’s *logos* was a basic, non-technical term. His interpretation supports the possibility that Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* is similarly defiant of Socrates’ admonitions regarding the danger of rhetorical speech”.

³⁵⁴ Aristotle contradicted himself on whether the *polis* is natural or man-made, and so it is unclear whether we can access the *aletheia* by pure contemplation (*bios theoretikos*) or by action (*bios praxis*). This is a subject of debate among Aristotle scholars.

³⁵⁵ Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 1335b33. Rhetoric should be a reflection on speaking, rather than discipline or

how because it has no determinate subject area, but it *can* be skillful or artful (BC, 127).³⁵⁶ Rhetoric always deals with a concrete situation which is always in an unpredictable fluctuation. Aristotelian rhetoric is a matter of speaking of concrete human events, for example, “in public meetings, before the court, at celebratory occasions” (BC, 110). Compared with Plato’s absolute truth which rules out other possibilities for human speech, Aristotle proposed different modes of relative truths. Therefore, public speech might not necessarily be either true or false. True or false is only logically valid, not necessarily the value of human speech.

Intriguingly, the pre-logic *logos* as *orismos* means horizon, limit, delimitation or differentiation; the Aristotelian foundation for our modern perception of logic. As a way of separating, *orismos* ensures the communicability of what *logos* has to say. Fascinatingly relevant in this context, it delimits the “genuine mode of entry into beings” (BC, 39-41). In other words, the human capacity to draw boundaries by limiting, mapping, pinpointing and demarcating the *phusis* (physical) world is a meta-*phusis* capability, for example, *logos* or *nous*.³⁵⁷ Therefore, this meta capability also includes making knowledge (*episteme*) accessible to human beings. Thus, as Heidegger implied, the significance of *zoon logon echon* as a genuine speaking (with) the world was driven by a necessity of *logos* as *orismos*. (BC, 77)³⁵⁸

Nevertheless, the innate problem of logic, according to Heidegger, is that it is “understood too narrowly”, and therefore in danger of pure abstraction

techné.

³⁵⁶ Through the lens of Aristotelian rhetoric, the function of *logos* is three-fold: 1) as determination of the *zoon praktike*, 2) as the character of the *eretai*, and 3) as the manner in which beings become accessible in their being – *logos ousias* as *orismos*.

³⁵⁷ “We must take measure of what it means to retrieve speaking from this alienation of Greek being-there, from the conversation and idle chatter, to bring speaking to that place in which Aristotle can say that *logos* is *logos ousias*, ‘speaking about the matter as to what it is.’” (BC, 108)

³⁵⁸ The other two have been discussed earlier in this chapter. “The definition of the human being as *zoon logon echon* turns out to be of much wider significance than it seemed at first: 1, in the definition itself: *zoon praktike meta logou*; 2, the being-possibilities which human beings can have at their disposal are divided up in accordance with this definition; 3, genuine speaking with the world, the *orismos*, is designated as *logos*.”

because logic as the doctrine of correct thinking is the thinking to think, or the learning to learn.³⁵⁹ As pure abstraction, it “circles empty around itself and detaches itself from all matters of things” (Heraclitus, 150). Caught up in this dilemma between logic as necessity and as total abstraction, Heidegger distinguished two modes of logic: the logic of thinking and the logic of things.³⁶⁰ To think logically means to think correctly regarding the “structure, form, and rules” of thinking, and to know how to apply them in given cases, whereas the logic of things designates “the inner consistency of a matter, a situation, a process”. Only when we follow and think the logic innate to some things are we thinking logically.³⁶¹

Speaking is thus the ontological foundation of *logos*. Arendt took the distinction between logic and human speech and applied it in her own project: the human relationship of care and action. In the following two sections, I shall discuss Arendt’s understanding and development of Heidegger’s teaching regarding the modern loss of speech, and how Arendt recovered human speech in the phenomenal world, as well as the world of meaningfulness. First, however, it is necessary to take a detour to understand the delicate relationship between the power of speech which we lose and the capability of human speech which is constitutive of our being.

5.2 The modern loss of speech

In this section, I argue that, the capacity to speak remains man’s potentiality

³⁵⁹ See Heidegger, *Plato’s Sophist*, 438. Heidegger admitted that logic is a total abstraction in thinking about thinking, which is a rather contrived and unnatural activity because the process of learning itself is thinking. p. 438, n.3. Thinking about thinking seems “warped and distorted by which thinking bends back towards itself and abandons its straight course”; it is “unusual and foreign to natural thinking and is an esoteric pursuit through which it is difficult for us to find a point of reference or a lead-line.” (Heraclitus, 150)

³⁶⁰ In the 1944 summer semester, Heidegger articulated the ambiguity of the term *logic* by consulting Heraclitus’s doctrine of the *logos* (Heraclitus, 143).

³⁶¹ Or as Heidegger said when judging the correctness, consistency and validity of logic thinking, “Therefore, there exists a two-fold logic: a logic of thinking that states how thinking properly follows and pursues things, and a logic of things that shows how and in what sense things have their own, internal consistency.” (Heraclitus, 149)

to transcend by naming for the first time and presenting to other human beings – as the two-fold function of *logos* discussed earlier. Yet, as I shall demonstrate next, so long as logic substituted for human speech, speech is in danger of losing its threefold power: 1) to disclose the uniqueness of the speaker, 2) to establish relationship with others by presenting the ‘who’ of the speaker and 3) to grant meaningfulness for human existence.

Before *logos* diverged into human speech and logic, human beings did not merely measure the world according to metaphysical categories in forms, weights and shapes, they also experienced the world and became enthralled by the sheer beauty of its unpredictability, uncertainty and ineffability as perceived through the sense organs. For Arendt, scientific developments were so successful that logic and scientific precision had infiltrated the realm of human affairs. Replaced by the now sovereign languages of governmental and legislative order, speech has lost its power to establish relationships and create meaning. She therefore said that scientists are moving in “a world where speech has lost its power” (HC, 3-4). Even so, she also optimistically suggested that speech, as one of those “general human capacities ... cannot be irretrievably lost so long as the human condition itself is not changed” (HC, 6). Perplexingly, however, how can speech both have lost its power and remain a general human capacity?

Before proceeding with this discussion, it is necessary to recognize the scholarship around Arendt’s political theory of speech. For most Arendtian readers, speech is a constant and reliable human capacity which constitutes the human condition which Arendt sought to analyse, among many other conditions such as labour, work and action. Few commentators have singled out and addressed speech in Arendt’s writings because speech is often taken to be coeval and coequal with action. Arendt said that they are “the same rank and the same kind” (HC, 24). This integrative reading is widely taken for granted

by Arendt's readers because "action cannot be performed without speech".³⁶² Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves interpreted speech in Arendt as "communicative action"³⁶³ but for Seyla Benhabib, d'Entrèves's terminology failed to capture the conceptual issues at stake in Arendt's work because communicative action is designed to reach an understanding between interlocutors on the basis of validity claims. Instead, Benhabib emphasized narrative action to indicate how human being is imbedded in a "web of relationships and enacted stories".³⁶⁴

Dana Villa seems to have recognized the subtler implication of Arendt's conception of speech. Villa similarly rejected the idea of reducing Arendt's concept of action/speech into communication.³⁶⁵ Rather than viewing speech as a reshaped human act, Villa retained Arendt's original instinct of speech as a human faculty. Further, Villa distinguished between the general and specific modes of speech.³⁶⁶ In general, the human capability of reasoned speech distinguishes men from other social creatures such as bees. Speech makes man a political animal because it enables human beings to ascend "above the level of mere need", that is, the biological life process. This kind of speech, as Villa explicitly suggested, has "its fundamental significance for a human life". But it is not enough to "deserve the title of action", that is to say, the human capability to speak is not necessarily regarded as a human act. What is specifically political in speech as action, according to Villa, is the deliberative speech which is "an end in itself". Arendt said that deliberative speech is "the speech-making and decision-taking, the oratory and the business, the thinking and the persuading".³⁶⁷ As Villa rightly highlighted, deliberative speech as act

³⁶² BINBUGA, B. N. 2016. Examining Hate Speech from the Perspective of Arendt's Political Theory. *METU Studies in Development*, 43, 707-724.

³⁶³ D'ENTRÈVES, M. P. 2002. *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, Routledge.

³⁶⁴ BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. pp. 42, 63, 70-72 and 124-6

³⁶⁵ See Villa, Arendt and Heidegger, pp. 42, 63, 70-72.

³⁶⁶ *ibid.* pp.31-33

³⁶⁷ Villa also contended that political speech "is end-constitutive: its goal does not stand apart from the process, dominating it at every point, but is rather formed in the course of 'performance' itself" (32).

is similar to what she designated as the power of speech.³⁶⁸

Like d'Entrèves and Benhabib, Villa also framed speech within Arendt's theory of action. But Villa's understanding is obviously more comprehensive in terms of taking the distinction between acting and making into account. In the following section, I shall take a different approach by focusing on the significance of speech as *logos* without conflating this with *praxis* more generally; I shall demonstrate the political significance of the human capability of speaking as the capacity, in the phenomenal world, to transcend.

We can now consider the question of how speech can both lose its power and remain a human capability. To understand this, we need to recognize why the power of speech is at stake especially in the realm of human affairs, which constitute our living/speaking world, as repeatedly said earlier. Admittedly, the remarkable capacity of reason (logic) flourishes modern technology, thanks to the human mind, which is remarkably capable of condensing and scaling our inhabited place on earth to the "size of the human body's natural sense and understanding" by using "numbers, symbols and models" (HC, 251). "The naked exposure to the exigencies of life", Arendt wrote, describes the conditions of labourers in the early stages of the industrial revolution (HC, 255). Consequently, modern researchers and scientists are no longer satisfied "to observe, to register, and to contemplate", but strive to "prescribe conditions" and "provoke natural process" (HC, 231). Ever since then, the old need of others, as understood by traditional political thinking as the 'unfortunate' necessity of plurality, have been further replaced or compensated in some way

³⁶⁸ So why is speech as act hierarchically higher than mere capability? Here is the logic: speech as a human faculty only has the function to distinguish human from non-human being, say plants, animals or god, whereas it is speech as a human act which distinguishes human being from a non-political state of being. For Arendt, the dimension of animality and sociality of human was the sole reason why she could not take human to be "fundamentally human", which Arendt did not explain although it chimes with Heidegger's notion of fundamental ontology (HC, 24). So does the faculty/act distinction help us discern a distinguishing role of speech in Arendt's theoretical building? Does it help to make sense of the extent to which speech is important in Arendt's political thinking? The faculty/act distinction of speech is the first step which I take to disentangle speech for further inquiry.

by governmental administration and all sorts of scientific flourishing.

Arendt saw that modern technology is reducing human speech into politically powerless machine languages (HC, 153).³⁶⁹ It is nevertheless one thing that the human mind has the capacity to condense and abstract, namely, to wield logic; it is quite another for the political realm of human affairs to become habituated to the simplified, digitalized way of being. Thus, I characterize the modern loss of human speech, by restructuring Arendt's depiction of labour and work, into two features: violence and isolation.

There is nothing wrong with human capacity to reduce *logos* into mere symbols, signs and other formal language forms belonging to modern science.³⁷⁰ The problem is, however, that the sustenance of human life and world (the conditions of labour and work), in the modern labouring and consuming society, seems no longer require complex language, e.g., to express subtle feelings and ineffable sensations. The work world is built through the muted violence done to nature to produce material, such as the destruction of trees to obtain wood and the reshaping of wood to make a table (HC, 153).³⁷¹ Incapable of speech, violence becomes "a marginal phenomenon in the political realm" (OR, 9)—the first feature of what I designate as the modern loss of speech.

The second feature of modern loss of speech is isolation. For Arendt, the basic condition of speech (action) is human plurality characterized by equality and distinction. Otherwise, "signs and sounds" would be enough to "communicate immediate, identical needs and wants would be enough" (HC, 175-6). Labour and work could be accomplished in isolation, as "the necessary

³⁶⁹ In commercial society, language become a mere computer language which can be saved, interpreted, analysed and translated in the hard drive as codes conform to certain rules.

³⁷⁰ TAMINIAUX, J. 1997. *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger*, SUNY Press. p. 57. Taminiaux highlighted the distinction between *Ausdruck und Bedeutung* (expression and meaning) in the reading of Husserl and Heidegger. Husserl took all the "marks, symptoms (*Auzeichen*), signs (*Zeichen*) and designations (*Bezeichnung*)" together as distinct from meaning. This distinction justifies the "phenomenological privilege of *Bedeutung* and the brushing aside of the symbolic realm".

³⁷¹ By building and creating, *homo faber* destroys God-given nature in a rather violent way.

life condition for every mastership” (HC, 160-61) According to Arendt, modern *homo faber* is actually living in a society which can guarantee his or her isolation; only in the state of isolation can *homo faber* in his workshop expect to enter a market place where everything has a value and is therefore exchangeable.

Yet, the exchangeability in the job market is not the same as the exchangeability of opinions, perspectives or horizons of different origins and plural cultures. The former exchangeability of values turns all interactions into transactions. With no exception, human beings are valued by calculable talents, workability, productivity and social resources in the job market because as soon as we are interchangeable in systematically manipulated isolation. I believe, what is at stake is the distinctness of ‘who’ an individual is. (HC, 160-161) Words and deeds only implicitly reveal who somebody is. Compared with action, speech can more immediately reveal the distinctness of who someone is by announcing, in time, what “he does, has done, and intends to do”.

So how does politics present the transcendental dimension of human beings who are capable of acting and speaking, through Arendt’s conception of plurality? Admittedly, “[T]here may be truths beyond speech, and they may be of great relevance to man in the singular, that is, to man in so far as he is not a political being ...” (HC. 4). For Arendt, meaningfulness was unavailable without speaking with other human beings:

Men in the plural ... can experience meaningfulness only because they can talk with and make sense to each other and to themselves. (HC, 4)

Here, I believe that meaningfulness is featured implicitly by its communicability or commensurability – not by the meaning of languages *per se*, but by what Arendt understood from the Kantian notion of common sense in pre-establishing a general accessibility and universal validity of aesthetic, moral or political judgment. So what we do, know or experience only makes sense when it can be spoken about, namely, be presentable. By their plurality, human beings are capable of experiencing meaningfulness out of their limited time of living, moving and acting in the world, only because they can make

sense and talk with each other. For instance, in a group, meeting or conference, the presence of somebody, speaker or audience, is felt and determined by the others, who can variably transmit and translate what they feel about each other, which involves not only the content of the presentation, but also, for example, a glance, a gesture or a differently pitched voice. This ineffability in respect of plurality has, however, been less discussed. In this way, I connect plurality with presentability. Presentability, as stated above, is essential to the human capacity to world, as transcendence is fundamental for us to be human.³⁷²

Indeed, human speech was particularly important for Arendt as a political act *par excellence*. Supplying the “lifeblood of the human artifact” and preserving the “public realm and the space of appearance”, human speech sustains the scenario for human affairs. Without delivering human speech to the scenario, the human artifact “lacks its ultimate *raison d’être*”. Arendt wrote

And without power, the space of appearance brought forth through action and speech in public will fade away as rapidly as the living deed and the living word. (HC, 204)

Power, as a general phenomenon of politics, is to be understood in terms of the “words and persuasion” which relate and unite people who live together in a *polis* to decide things which are public. Only in being talked about does the human artifact become more than “a heap of unrelated things”; in turn, without ‘housing’ words and deeds within the human artifact, “human affairs would be as floating [and] futile” (HC, 204). Instead of a futile existence, human beings can lead a meaningful life in a *polis* where human speech is intact to lend the ultimate *raison d’être* to human artifacts, to house human affairs. Furthermore, Arendt warned, however, that we should not confuse power with violence. Unlike powerful persuasion in the *polis*, violent commandment is the “pre-political way” to deal with people. This pre-political way characterizes the “life

³⁷² The presentability in phenomenology requires more than the object/subject distinction; rather, presentability requires the condition of action: plurality.

outside the *polis*, of home and family life” (HC 26-27).

To conclude, the modern loss of speech emerges with the rise of modern *homo faber*, whose ‘languages’ decide how the world is to be experienced and how relationships are to be handled. Consequently, human speech has lost its power: 1) to reveal who somebody unexchangeably is, 2) to establish relationships with the world and with other human beings, and 3) to generate meaning from within human existence. In this regard, Arendt concluded that man is political as long as he is constituted through “the faculty of speech, the power to understand, to make himself understood, and to persuade”. In the following section, I shall further expand and develop these points.

5.3 Logos: the dilemma of meaning

Having discussed Heidegger’s retrieval of the original meaning of the Greek *logos* which ramified as logic and human speech, and took a detour to analyse the subtle difference between the power of speech and the capacity of speech in Arendt’s account of the modern loss of speech. In this section, I shall address to the question of how Arendt implicitly responded to Heidegger’s project. In developing an account of the dilemma of meaning in *logos*, first, I shall show the significance of *logos* in Arendt’s conception of speech, and then, I shall demonstrate the way in which Arendt recovered human speech in the world of appearances as well as the world of meaningfulness.

The overall question which struck Arendt was how do we, as mortal and finite beings, fathom meaning which is not derived from any particular axiomatic truth or foundational tenet. What is meaning? How do we achieve it?

Indeed, the dilemma of meaning in *logos* was explicitly exemplified by the distinction between proposition and prayer by Arendt. A proposition (*apophantikos*) is a sentence which carries meaning and conveys a clear message to the hearer, and it has two values in logic: true or false. In machine

language, a proposition can be 1 or 0 in the binary system. However, a prayer is a *logos*, but is neither true or false. A prayer is “significant sound” (*phone semantike*) with regard to the fact that “*logos* is speech in which words are put together to form a sentence that is totally meaningful by virtue of synthesis” (LM, I:99). What is at work here is the ramification of logic and human speech, or in Arendt’s understanding: human speech and proposition.

In a similar vein, Arendt differentiated human language from the language of animals by following the Aristotelian distinctions: mind-soul and *phone-logos*. Human language, “with its intrinsic complexity of grammar and syntax”, is operated by the human mind, whereas the language of animals – such as sounds, signs and gestures – belongs to the soul. The inner psychic ground of human beings is “the same for all”, and it only produces symbols or inarticulate noises which naturally express affections (*pathemata*), such as desires or urges, and reveals something similar to “those made by animals”.³⁷³ The mind-soul distinction is symmetrical with the *phone-logos* distinction. *Phone* designates the sound of animals and *logos* the human voice. *Phone* is merely pointing to things which give pleasure or cause pain.

Unlike the contemplative tradition which values truth (*alethia*) more than opinion (*doxa*), Arendt took human beings as the location of *doxa*. For Arendt, *doxa* belonged to the realm of appearances and the realm of human affairs. Before *doxa* became mere opinion in the bad sense, it designated a standpoint which allows us to begin talking to one another. Key here, *doxa* designates the unique perspective which each individual brings to the phenomenal world, as ‘it seems to me’. Thus, *dokei moi* means it appears to me, and therefore it appears to you. *Dokei moi* creates a sense of meaningfulness based on which the whole point of speech in rhetoric and politics is the quest for meaning and meaningfulness rather than “the quest for truth” (LM, I:99). *Doxa* could

³⁷³ This Aristotelian analysis of the sameness of the human psyche is the very basis of psychology and psychoanalysis; just as the sameness of our inner organs is the basis for science of physiology and medicine.

designate human senses as a passage towards the ineffable, as something which the thinker can never say. I believe that this passage is a blind spot in metaphysical language. Here, transcendence designates an ineffable passage within human existence and the human capability to set up fences and barriers is the “genuine mode of entry into being” (BC, 39-41).

In Arendt’s political theory, physical sensations belong to the private intimate sphere which lacks worldly reality as you cannot share your feelings with other people.³⁷⁴ Contrarily, human speech voices meaning; and meaning is something above mere pointing. Human existence is beyond mere sounding and pointing. More intricately, human beings are capable of developing extra senses of good or bad, wrong or right, just or unjust. Indeed, by virtue of speech we are made political precisely because we can tell right from wrong, good from bad, just from unjust.³⁷⁵

For Arendt, the political relevance of the modern loss of speech was at stake insofar as we “in all earnest adopt a way of life in which speech is no longer meaningful” (HC, 3-4) because we use and trust logic instead of human speech since modern *homo faber* is caught up in the “dilemma of meaninglessness” which describes the futile search for meaning in terms of use value (HC, 154-5).³⁷⁶ In a labouring and consuming society, fabrication is entirely determined by the categories of means and end, which belong to the philosophy of utilitarianism. In this case, nothing matters but the suitability and usefulness for the desired end.³⁷⁷ In other words, to pursue meaning which is “an end in itself” in the work world is a tautology. Whether achieved or not,

³⁷⁴ See BOWRING, F. 2011. *Hannah Arendt: A Critical Introduction*, London, Pluto Press. p.15.

³⁷⁵ As a living being which speaks, man is such a kind of being which is differentiated from animals by *phone* (sound) or mere *Zuhandensein*.

³⁷⁶ Utility established as meaning generates meaninglessness and “all ends are bound to be of short duration and to be transformed into means to further ends”. The only way to cut the endless chain is to declare that one thing or another is an end itself.

³⁷⁷ The perplexity of confusing utility and meaningfulness within the doctrine of utilitarianism rises out of the never-ending means-end chain. On the one hand, in the utilitarian world, the end justifies the means. The end justifies the violence which humans do to nature in order to win the material just as the wood which we need to make tables and chairs justifies the killing of trees and the destruction of forests.

meaning must transcend its use-value, that is, “must be permanent and lose nothing of its character”. The integrity of meaning, however, is unfathomable for *homo faber*, just as instrumentality is unintelligible for *animal laborans* (HC, 155).

The way to get out of this dilemma is to “turn away from objective world of use” and fall back upon the subjective use itself. To “acquire the dignity of meaningfulness”, utility should put the user, not the producer, at the top of the list in order to “stop the unending chain of ends and means” (HC, 155). However, the tragedy of falling back is the devaluation of all valuable things: whether man or God is the measure of all things which are, or of the non-existence of things which are not, modern *homo faber* takes everything as a means to some higher end.

Arendt made similar comments about the naming force of language: the powerful force struck the first nominator/philosopher and later interpreters (LM, I:104).³⁷⁸ The “original experience” refers to a “return to the origin” by “revealing the phenomenal core of the prephilosophic Greek experience of politics”.³⁷⁹

For Arendt, words, as the carriers of meaning, are meaningful in themselves. However, meaning in the form of human speech is slippery. If someone wants to see and grasp the meaning, it “slips away” (LM, I:122). Intriguingly, Arendt used the metaphor of a house to designate a group of words – the “carriers of meaning”. The “house of words” implies a dwelling, having a home or being housed. The house provides a comfortable dwelling place within which words or concepts become “something like a frozen thought that thinking must unfreeze whenever it wants to find out the original meaning” (LM, I:171). However, the original meaning is difficult to discern, partly because the thinking

³⁷⁸ “All philosophical terms are metaphors, frozen analogies, as it were, whose true meaning discloses itself when we dissolve the term into the original context, which must have been vivid in the mind of the first philosopher to use it.”

³⁷⁹ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. (114)

activity is hard to unfreeze and partly because there are words which are seemingly indefinable, such as happiness, courage and justice. Being “part and parcel of our everyday speech”, these words become slippery when we try to define them, and “when we talk about their meaning, nothing stays put anymore, everything begins to move”, said Arendt (LM, I:170). We can think of or talk about happy children, a beautiful landscape, courageous men or just deeds. But when asked “What exactly is happiness, beauty, courage or justice?”, we are no longer certain.³⁸⁰

Barbara Cassin may be right when she suggested a proposition: instead of catching homesickness for the fatherland of European Germany, Arendt’s nostalgia was rather a linguistic one, for being at home in the mother tongue.³⁸¹ Linguistically, for Greeks, being, appearing and thinking were not separated in the language and thought of *phusis* (the sensible world), therefore we should be careful with the way that traditional metaphysics makes division and categories. Heidegger said that “Physics determines the essence and the history of metaphysics from the inception onward” (IM, 14), and the questionableness of metaphysics which has moved and formed western philosophy is also rooted in this concept. *Phusis* “appears in Greek language and thought not primarily as something observed in ‘nature,’ but as the power of language and thought” which gives rise to the appearance of things”.³⁸² The naming force of *phusis* granted by the Greek language was what Heidegger chose to elaborate the movement of *meta* as a leap or an overstepping.³⁸³

In this regard, what Heidegger understood as *phusis* in Arendt’s political thinking designates the human beings who are capable of granting meanings

³⁸⁰ According to Arendt, it was Socrates who discovered these concepts which constitute the Greek language.

³⁸¹ CASSIN, B. 2016b. *Nostalgia: When Are We Ever at Home?*, trans. BRAULT, P.-A., Fordham University.

³⁸² SCOTT, C. E. 2001. The Appearance of Metaphysics. *A Companion to Heidegger's Introduction to Metaphysics*. (Gregory Fried & Richard Polt, Eds.). New Haven: Yale UP. p. 28.

³⁸³ *Ibid.* 26. “By that word we find not only a site of the leap. We find as well something about language, thinking, and appearing.”

to things and metaphorizing ineffable experiences into forms which are visible, sensible, tangible and audible. Only in this way can the dilemma of meaning in *logos* be dissolved as it reclaims the meaning of words again by merging logic and human speech into the ineffableness of the human experience when we world by naming by creating new words spontaneously, rather than simplified machine-coding.

Next, I shall demonstrate the methodological relevance of *logos*: the hermeneutic phenomenology which designates the way in which the world and the events happening in it are to be understood from a phenomenological perspective, whereas to some extent staying true to the original living experiences which give rise to the meaning of the words for the first time: the human capacity to name.

5.4 Speaking: the human capability to transcend

The political claim insists that speech is utterly crucial for us to bridge the human and the world. When she accepted the Lessing Prize, Arendt problematized speech as the inter-locus between the human and the world: “We humanize what is going on in the world and in ourselves by *speaking* of it, and in the course of *speaking* of it we learn to be human” (MDT, 25). This pretty much means that through speaking of historical worldly events, we humanize the world, as well as learn to be human. The writing style there was quite unusual for Arendt: extraordinarily compact, tautological and pedantic. She assumed that we already know what speaking means (HC, 178 & 184).³⁸⁴ However, as the “primordially and specifically” human capacity to world, as Arendt put it in *The Human Condition*, we still have no clue what speech means here, regarding why and how speech operates or functions through human

³⁸⁴ Could this mean that action and speech together create a web of relationships to deal with human affairs and therefore insert themselves into a world of appearances, that is the human world?

beings, to determine the essence of man himself, the world and the relation between them.

In this section, I argue that speaking as naming is the human capability to transcend, which belongs to one aspect of worlding. I begin with the less discussed sense capacities which are essential to human speech – hearing and listening – in the realm of human affairs and the world of appearances. I shall then identify three constitutive aspects of the capability of human speech: speechless wonder, the capacity to speak and the urge to be heard. All three aspects characterize human beings who are capable of worlding and transcending by way of naming.

First, in *The Human Condition*, Arendt followed Heidegger and traced the origin of how *logos* was experienced and articulated in the sphere of politics. In *The Life of the Mind*, she developed her own understanding of the ramification of *logos* into human speech and logic. On the one hand, the speechless pathos of wonder (*thaumadzein*), or the sixth sense, is the most general characteristic of thinking. Speechless wonder begins with the initial encounter of human beings with things which are seemingly invisible and intangible but yet perceivable and sensible. In other words, the ineffability of human experiences is a transcendental dimension of human beings. One of the most important aspects of Arendt's debt to Heidegger, in terms of *logos*, was the human capability to speak by visualizing the ineffable. To speak of the speechless wonder, the significance of *logos* lies in its suggestive ambiguity. Provided that the god of the poets "does not speak out nor does he conceal but *indicates*", *logos* "hints at something ambiguously" and "to be understood only by those who understand mere hints" (LM, I:144) There is something ineffable behind the written words, something of which philosophers "were aware but [which] refused to be pinned down and handed over to others", even with metaphors which transform the invisible into the world of appearance.

In this regard, Arendt introduced the metaphor of the *daimon* to visualize and thereby to solve the conundrum: she said that legend has told us that there is a *daimon* "looking over one's shoulder" which is only observable to the people

acting and speaking in front of us. This is why the public sphere is needed for allowing others to intuit who I am, and I can collage a fuller picture from snippets of their reactionary response to me in their action and speech. Similarly, Schwartz explored the hidden faculty – the sixth sense – within Arendt's appropriation of Kant's analysis of the phenomenon of common sense and argued that the sixth sense leads us toward an enlarged thinking which transcends our personal interests by taking others into our vista.³⁸⁵

Dan Degerman, Sonja Boos and anyone else who analyses the distinction between 'who' and 'what' in Arendt in regard to how Arendt refused to designate the being of human as a descriptive subject but as a constitutive agent as being-in-the-world, are, in their own milieu, exploring a similar issue. For instance, Boos pointed out the epistemological paradox regarding the self-revelation of who somebody is: it transcends any verbal expression. The whoness reveals itself through words and deeds but the self-revelation of 'who' is never a self-claimed sovereignty, because "we can neither actively trigger nor prevent it". The whoness only "reveals itself when we are intuited by someone else", even though the 'someone' can never acquire legitimate certainty of the who. Our human language constantly fails us in fully demonstrating 'who' somebody is; what language can grasp is only 'what' somebody is: gender, height, race, profession, skin-colour and so on. Such descriptive language can never fully capture the essence of 'who,' which is "utterly elusive and volatile".³⁸⁶

As a way of critique, according to Arendt, the primary job of philosophers (including Heidegger) is to fathom and to try to make manifest the areas which evade human knowledge. Plato still held that the true *arche*, the beginning and principle of philosophy, is wonder (LM, I:114). For philosophers, the highest possibility of being human is not *logos* but *nous*, which is *alogos*. *Nous* is

³⁸⁵ SCHWARTZ, J. P. 2019. To Choose One's Company: Arendt, Kant, and the Political Sixth Sense. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 18, 108-127.

³⁸⁶ BOOS, S. 2014. "Hannah Arendt". *Speaking the Unspeakable in Postwar Germany: Toward a Public Discourse on the Holocaust*. Cornell University Library: Cornell University Press.

unspeakable but not unfathomable. Truth is *alogos*, too. But why does *logos* have to *legein* (reveal) the *alogos*? Or how do we speak, and thereby, present the ineffable?³⁸⁷

Secondly, the capacity to speak is the capacity to present the ineffable: “The moment we speak”, Arendt said, we collect the visible into something which has not been given in sense data. House, fruit and animal are genres which are pretty abstract. Indeed, “the more primitive a language is, the more words it has”. Thus, the speechless wonder characterizes the lack of words to deal with the invisible – the ineffability.³⁸⁸ Compared with the lower senses of smell, taste and touch, seeing and hearing are more articulable and less ineffable because they “have more affinity with words”. The only way we can describe ineffable feelings in words is by using metaphor which links to something familiar and visible with the ‘like’ in, for example, “something smells like a rose, taste like pea soup, feels like velvet”: Arendt said frustratedly that this is as far as we can go (LM, I:119).

Thus the capacity to speak designates one aspect of the presentability of the worlding capacity. We can speak with metaphors because language can lend itself to “metaphorical usage” and “enables us to think” and to carry over the sensory experiences (LM, 110). In other words, human beings’ capability of transforming the invisible into an appearance is naturally endowed as a gift of language. To be human is to see and to be seen by others, to be present and perceived by others, and to talk to, listen to and understand what other people say.

Third, the true motive of the urge to speak is the urge to be heard, the same

³⁸⁷ This question corresponds to the previously discussed enigma about the concept of *logos* that *logos* and *legein* mean speech, word and saying, but are not at all related to anything language-like or to any linguistic activity.

³⁸⁸ “Invisible: The moment we speak, we take visibles together into something that is not given in sense data: house, fruit, animal etc. The more primitive a language is, the more words it has: one for each particular. Speech is shot through with words of general meaning, invisible because applied to many visible things.” (DTB, 749)

as to be seen, to appear, to be recognized and to be praised, which belongs to the phenomenal world. The urge to speak is no different from the urge to appear.

Even so, speaking is a more thoughtful appearing because speech and thinking are inseparable and identical within the concept of *logos*; whereas *logos* used to unite action and thought. Just as appearing beings have an urge to show themselves, thinking beings have an urge to speak; thus, “mental activities ... become manifest only through speech” (LM, I:98). The urges to speak and to be heard are two sides of the same coin, they form “the genuine drive” which “belongs to the human being” by whom language is possessed and spoken. (BC, 21) Seeing this, Arendt borrowed Heidegger’s *volō ut sis* (‘I want you to be’) in order to claim that “the highest form of recognition is love” (DTB, 748).³⁸⁹ To be recognized contains the need to be understood. And understanding is “a spontaneous activity” instead of the “receptivity of our senses” to everything that is alive and therefore has the urge to appear. There is another example which Arendt gave in terms of the lying about facts and lying about feelings. Every show of anger is a reflection of our feeling of anger. We decide and choose what sort of show to use to represent our inner sensation.

However, appearance not only reveals, it also conceals: “At any rate, this is true for living things, whose surface hides and protects the inner organs that are their source of life” (LM, I:25). For Arendt, one of the most important roles played by appearance in the functioning of living things is that it has to protect and hide something which is not appropriate to be exposed to the light of an appearing world: “Whatever can see wants to be seen, whatever can hear calls out to be heard, whatever can touch presents itself to be touched” (LM, I:29). Thus the urge to be heard requires the ability to listen. Listening to the calling of speech as the entrance into the invisible can be transformed into the naming

³⁸⁹ “The very fact of appearance – the urge to appear – shows a claim for recognition and praise. All that appears wants to be seen and recognized and praised. The highest form of recognition is love: *volō ut sis*. The wonder implies affirmation.” (November 1969)

force of human beings who are capable of metaphorizing. Arendt said that

Man's listening transforms the silent claim of Being into speech, and 'language is the language of Being as the clouds are the clouds of the sky.'" (LM, I:174)

Intriguingly, this is contrary to the western philosophical tradition that seeing is always prior to listening because language in its verbal sense is slippery. What can be secured, for Heidegger, is to guard language – the house of being.³⁹⁰

The sense of hearing as access to speech plays a relatively marginal role in Arendt's political phenomenology given the prominent metaphor of light/dark, visibility and appearance in her work. However, the sense of hearing is of unquestionably vital importance in Arendt's political phenomenology regarding the human faculty of speech. For hearing provides accessibility to a phenomenal world of words and language, which are always found "appropriate through [its] provisional home in the *audible* world" (LM, I:109). Arendt reiterated the "twofold transformation" which Plato described in the *Seventh Letter*, regarding how it is that our "*sense perception* can be talked about and how this *talking about* is next transformed into an *image visible only to the soul*" (LM, I:117). Seeing an image projected onto the soul, our original encounter with the world of things actually "*names* for what we see". For example, the name 'circle' designates something round. This name "can be explained in speech (logos) in sentences 'composed of nouns and verbs'". Or in geometry, we name a circle as something which "has everywhere equal distances between its extremities and its center" (*ibid.*).

Rather interestingly, Arendt related political freedom to human capacity of seeing and hearing. In seeing, we can choose the object, and calculate the

³⁹⁰ The primacy of hearing over seeing, I believe, constitutes one of the crucial evidences of Arendt's implicit indebtedness to Heidegger. Gareth Williams and James Muldoon suggested that Arendt contended that neither sight nor hearing (or any other sense) offers an adequate metaphor for thinking.

distance from the seen object, by closing or opening our eyes and moving towards or away from the seen object. The possibility to choose guarantees a degree of freedom. On the contrary, in hearing, “the percipient is at the mercy of something or somebody else”, because we cannot shut our ears; the German word for ‘hearing’ implies non-freedom, according to Arendt (LM, I:215).³⁹¹ Here, I believe, Arendt was not randomly playing language game in German; she was implicitly practicing hermeneutic phenomenology Heidegger had taught her.

Key here is that, the relationship between speaking and hearing can never be simplified within the traditional structure of the dualism of ordering-obeying and subjective-objective. Rather, speaking and hearing constitute the phenomenal world of appearance: the urge to appear as to be heard. Thus, speaking (the urge to be heard) and hearing (the capacity to listen to) are inter-dependent and co-determinant. Therefore, the primary concern for political phenomenology is not to categorize different human beings (into color, race, nationality, ethnicity), but rather, to distinguish how humans to be (as to appear). The manner of appearing is the manner of being for political phenomenology.

Hearing never means obeying orders unthinkingly. In particular, Arendt saw Eichmann as a boaster, a mediocre nobody, full of boring officialese, clichés and empty phrases, who committed the greatest crime in human history by simply obeying orders (EJ, 49; RJ, 150).³⁹² From Eichmann’s trial, we see that the disempowering capacity of thinking is accompanied by the fact that human speech has been reduced to a system of an organ which produces sound, commands and orders to be executed. This insight brings us back to the question of nobodyness: Arendt asked: ‘Why is there anybody rather than nobody?’ She was trying to rescue human beings, never simply as non-free

³⁹¹ The German verb *hoeren* means ‘to hear’ and the derivatives *gehorchen, hoerig, gehoeren* mean respectively, ‘to obey’, ‘be in bondage’, ‘belong’. In ‘hearing,’ without choice, what you are saying, I ‘belong’ to you.

³⁹² Thereafter, she explored thinking, moral judgment and responsibility only to discover that to be morally responsible, particular in an age of crisis, requires the capacity to think and speak as human.

hearing recipients, from the structure of ordering-obeying dualism. But how? In this regard, her instinct followed Heidegger through the hermeneutic horizon of human existence: time.

Time flows as we speak and listen; utterance and hearing constitute the dynamic flow of time. Time is the transcendental horizon for the human capacity to world, hearing is closer to the meta dimension of human existence than seeing, because hearing has the ability to follow sequences. Arendt exemplified the Hebrew tradition which “values hearing over sight” despite the “invisibility of truth” in the Jewish religion being the same as the “ineffability in Greek philosophy” (LM, I:119). In this context, thinking belongs to the realm of appearances because thinking needs speech in order to manifest itself and to be activated at all. What is thought “can never be an intuition” or something self-evident which is “beheld in speechless contemplation” because speech is conducted in “sequences of sentences”, namely, in language (LM, I:121). Time is the transcendental horizon of being and seems to be a hermeneutic horizon for phenomenology. In political settings, time is not an abstract concept, but a phenomenological horizon for human being, in this case, human life, because life is itself a “concrete occurrence”, a “temporal happening” and “a verbal substantive”. Life is an actualization of the verb ‘to live’, to complete a journey with a beginning and an end.³⁹³ In other words, both birth and death constitute the worldly (phenomenological) events.

By freeing hearing from the order-obeying structure with the temporal events of human existence, I contend that, Arendt identified speaking and thinking as capacitating human beings with worlding and transcending power. Margaret Canovan suggested that in the early Greek *polis*, the concept of *logos* meant speech as well as thinking and the unity of thought and action was symbolized by speech *logos*. According to Arendt, Greek politics was actually

³⁹³ KLUN, B. 2018. Horizon, Transcendence, and Correlation: Some Phenomenological Considerations. *Journal for Cultural & Religious Theory*, 17, 354-366. 358.

conducted through this determination of *logos*, i.e. how action was carried out within *polis* “by means of persuasion rather than force.” The significance of this also meant that via endless talk among citizens, “action disclosed thought,” and thought inform action.³⁹⁴

Actually, thinking takes place within the private or intimate sphere – it is the dialogue of one with oneself in solitude (EU, 443).³⁹⁵ That is, the ‘pure dialogue’ originates from the experience of thinking in solitude, instead of political experience of daily life. Thinking, in Arendt’s opinion, has its ethical and political implications for moral preparation: one has to get along with oneself when he or she is alone. As a result, what motivated Arendt to return to the realm of *vita comtemplativa* in her later life was Eichmann’s obvious incapability of “uttering a single sentence that was not a cliché” which petrified his pattern of language and choice of words whether he was speaking “to the police examiner or to the court” (EJ, 48-49). According to Norberg, Arendt was observing what she thought was a high-ranking war criminal, but who turned out, to her own surprise, to be a disturbingly ordinary person who not only was incapable of thinking, but also insensitive to degrees of verbal aptitude.³⁹⁶

Humans “*name* world that toward which Dasein as such *transcends*” and the world is characteristically transcendental as it “constitutes the unitary structure of transcendence”.³⁹⁷ Before turning into various ways of communication, in audible or written form, language “brings beings as beings into the open for the first time”. The openness of beings is impenetrable without language (OWA, 198). Naming is the creation of words and words acquire their meaning for the first time, and language “brings beings to the world and to

³⁹⁴ CANOVAN, M. 1990. Socrates or Heidegger? Hannah Arendt's Reflections on Philosophy and Politics. *Social Research*, 135-165.

³⁹⁵ See “The Concern with Politics” in EU.

³⁹⁶ NORBERG, J. 2010. The Political Theory of the Cliché: Hannah Arendt reading Adolf Eichmann. *Cultural Critique*, 76, 74-97.

³⁹⁷ The original text is taken from Heidegger’s essay *Vom Wesen des Grundes* (‘On The Essence of Ground’), p.138; and I quote this text from p.494, MORAN, D. 2014. What Does Heidegger Mean by the Transcendence of Dasein? *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 22, 491–514., italics by the current author.

appearance". By naming, human beings establish a channel which conveys us to the impenetrable world of things and other humans. Arendt remarked that the human capability of the "sheer naming of things" is the "human way of appropriating" and "disalienating the world into which, after all, each of us is born as a newcomer and a stranger" (LM, I:100).

In this context, as we saw in last chapter, Arendt depicted the metaphor of the desert, which illustrates the "original strangeness" of the world as a transitional home for human beings who are always searching for meaning beyond and outside their own existence. It is this estrangement from the world that sets the tone for the modern loss of human speech (characterized as violence and muteness) insofar as human speech belongs to the world of appearances: the existential horizon toward which human existence transcends.

For Arendt, the hermeneutic naming moment was the moment of foundation, action, initiation and natality, all of which refer to the human capacity to begin and to create. Following, but slightly different from, Heidegger's later obsession with languages regarding the etymology or terminology of words and concepts, Arendt took a hermeneutic turn to describe and interpret the human condition both phenomenologically and hermeneutically. That is to say, the fundamental principle in Arendt's phenomenological hermeneutics was to stay true to the original meaning of the words as well as the original life or political experiences which give rise to the meaning of the words.

Thus far, I have emphasized the naming capacity of human speech to exemplify worlding as the transcending of human beings. Arendt's interpretation of human speech in terms of the Greek concept of *logos* was based on her appropriation of hermeneutic phenomenology: speechless wonder, and capacity to speak and listen, and the urge to be heard. To better understand Arendt's hermeneutic phenomenology of human speech, I turn to *logos* to make two interrelated claims regarding the human capability to speak. First, the ontological claim: as a 'given' gift, the meta capacity to speak and think through metaphors is to hand over the ineffable to the visible and perceivable. Second, the political claim: through the course of speaking about what is going on in the

world, Arendt suggested that we “humanize the world”, because during our speaking, flowers blossom and wither away, time flows, life is lived and the journey is undertaken irrevocably and irreversibly.

Through the discussion in this chapter, it is my intention that we shall have a clearer understanding of how and why human speech has been simplified, if not altogether replaced, by relying on too much on machine language in the sphere of human life. The human speech, in its most natural and authentic form, is in danger and the implication is that we shall lose the accessibility and thereby the capacity to *transcend*, even if, we shall still retain the speechless wonder, the capacity to speak and the urge to be heard. As a remedy, as I propose from Heideggerian perspective, the only possible way of reclaiming the power of speech is through hearing and listening to, with openness and questions, the call of being.

Conclusion

This chapter began with Heidegger’s reclamation of the original meaning of *logos* in *legein* as laying out, and its division into logic and human speech. We then discussed the subtle difference between human speech as a capacity which we are born with and a power which we can lose in the modern world because of the spread of machine languages. The power of speech has three functions: first, to reveal who somebody unexchangeably is, second, to establish relationships with the world and with other human beings, and third, to generate meaning from within human existence. This led to the dilemma of meaning with *logos* as logic and human speech in the modern world, and then to the discovery that the meaningfulness of *logos* is not about truth or falsehood, but the richness of human speech which embraces ambiguity, which leaves interpretive space as access to addressing the ineffable. In the final section, I have demonstrated, through hermeneutic phenomenology, how speaking can name the ineffable – the speechless wonder, through the other two aspects of the power of speech: the capacity to speak and the urge to be heard. Both of these belong to the phenomenal world, as well as the presentability which is

constitutive to the worlding capacity of human beings.

In Part Two, I have shown loving and speaking, through the Roman concept of *amor mundi* and the Greek *logos*, to be two essential capabilities which constitute one part of the capacity to world. In problematizing the dialectics of *amor mundi* as untenable worldly love and the dilemma of *logos* to speak the unspeakable, I took the hermeneutic phenomenological gaze into Arendt's political text to pursue an interpretation of her understanding of the human *being* – from 'who' to 'how' – in boundary-drawing and naming the ineffable.

In Part Three, I shall demonstrate how human existence is the carrier of *polis* and *auctoritas* as the other part of the capacity to world. I shall designate the Greek concept of *polis* as the site of human existence and the Roman concept of *auctoritas* as the depth of human existence. Unlike the capabilities of loving and speaking, as rather the political and spontaneous virtue of being, I understand that the basis of the human capacity to remember and augment is grounded within human existence as a carrier of time. In this, 'carrier' is a synonym with 'container'.

Part THREE

Capacity as Carrier

6 Polis: Human as Carrier of Space

Modern technology has not only sped up its development but also revolutionized the way in which we take part in modern politics. Twitter, as a forum of self-expressed speech and productive conversations, is significant in providing modern human beings with the opportunity “to do the very thing that constitutes our humanity”.³⁹⁸ This opportunity, according to Arendt, has been long gone since the Greek *polis*. Obviously the Arendtian concept of the *polis* is usually understood more as a space where the prerequisites of speech – equality and freedom – are made possible.

Clearly Arendt did not live to see nor even anticipate such a thing as a product of modern technology. Indeed, today’s memory of the Greek *polis* is anchored in the view that it is long gone, but it is certainly not a conceptual mascot carrying memories and sending wishes from the past. The loss of the *polis* can be understood as the loss of the human capacity to world, namely, to build and care for the world by remembering.

Unlike thought and cognition, intelligence, “the mental process which feeds on brain power” as Arendt defined it, can indeed be tested and measured. Intelligence includes “the power of logical reasoning” such as deduction, and axiomatic statements such as the “subsumption of particular occurrences under general rules or these human techniques of spinning out consistent chains of conclusions” (HC, 171). As normal, healthy individuals, we all acquire intelligence, and the structure of the human brain, like the structure and function of the human body, is subject to the laws of logic which tell us that two and two equal four. What concerned Arendt was that if it is the case that the modern understanding of human beings as *animal rational* are “endowed with superior

³⁹⁸ Stanley Raffel conducted a thought experiment with a rather controversial but widely used social media, Twitter. RAFFEL, S. 2017. Twitter through the Prism of Hannah Arendt and Maurice Blanchot. *Diacritics*, 45, 54-74.

brain power” to other animals, then “the newly invented electronic machines ... are so spectacularly more intelligent than human beings in terms of speed and memory” (HC, 172).³⁹⁹

The instrumentalization of the city begins with the traditional ontology and theology which often regard the city as a transition to or terminus of some transcendental mode of existence, whereas from the hermeneutic phenomenological perspective, human existence is the ‘carrier’ of the *polis* and the city is the ‘site’ of human existence.⁴⁰⁰ This does not mean that human beings are locus of or passage toward the otherworld, but that they are capable of worlding (building and caring) for the space of appearances and space of remembrance. So instead of interpreting the *polis* as a platform for display, this chapter emphasizes another dimension of the *polis* as a way to world by remembering. By remembering, human beings are capable of transcending in the sense of escaping their “local and temporal finitude”, which I shall elaborate later in section one.

Arendt’s interpretation of the human capacity to act as a carrier of time follows from a recognition of the influence of Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation of the *polis* as an “historical site” which in turn, provides a perspective which allows us to see the transcendental dimension of human being in Arendt’s political thought. In the first section, I shall therefore turn to Heidegger’s explication of the pre-philosophical experience of *polis* as a place where things, as well as humans, could *be* at all. In particular, I shall consider the relevance of the story of Er from Plato’s parable of the cave retold

³⁹⁹ As Arendt commented: “All that giant computers prove is that the modern age was wrong to believe with Hobbes that rationality, in the sense of ‘reckoning with consequences’, is the highest and more human of man’s capacities, and that the life and labor philosophers, Marx and Bergson or Nietzsche, were right to see in this type of intelligence, which they mistook for reason, a mere function of the life process itself, or, as Hume put it, a mere ‘slave of the passions’. Obviously, this brain power and the compelling logical processes it generates are not capable of erecting a world, are as worldless as the compulsory process of life, labor, and consumption.”

⁴⁰⁰ The function of the carrier (remembering and augmenting) as the human capacity to world is distinguished by the capability of loving and speaking.

by Heidegger. As a messenger, Er ascended from here to there. This is to be understood not in a traditional ontological or theological sense, but that human existence itself harbours and nurtures possibilities which could reach an articulation of the 'there' of non-being (death as nothingness) from the perspective of 'here' on earth (in the *polis*). The being-nonbeing distinction in the story of Er also sheds some light on the structural dialectics of *aleithia* and *lethe*, which tells us that the truth (*aletheia*) of the *polis* is un-forgetting (*a-lethe*).

In the second section, I shall examine the decisive question of the human against the background of modern technology which brings about the loss of the *polis* as withering away of the public space and the loss of human beings who are capable of understanding and memorizing. Does the *polis* still hold a degree of conceptual power which is strong enough to depict new phenomena even if it has become apparently 'obsolescent'?⁴⁰¹ Could it be that the sense of loss strikes us not necessarily as nostalgia for the past nor a remedy for the present, but more plausibly for the loss of human, as a gesture of returning to the simplicity and purity of being human at all?⁴⁰²

In the third section, I shall show how Arendt incorporated Heidegger's retrieval of the Greek *polis* into her own understanding of the political and beyond. Rather than treating the *polis* as a work of art, which is tainted with a tendency of metaphysical grounding, I shall shift my attention to Heidegger's dialectic structure of *lethe-aletheia* to appreciate his ontological understanding of the *polis*. I shall therefore consider the *polis* as the site of human existence upon which Arendt built her political theory.

In the final section, I shall analyse how Arendt developed these Heideggerian insights by theorizing the human condition within the context of

⁴⁰¹ See MARSHAL, D. 2010. The Polis and its Analogues in the Thought of Hannah Arendt. *Modern Intellectual History*, 7, 123-149. p. 123-5. David Marshal suggested that, as a phenomenon of intrinsic interest for intellectuals, "the persistence of the polis as a *topos* for thinking far beyond its historical instantiation in the ancient world is striking".

⁴⁰² The loss of human as the central theme, as I shall repeatedly maintain, hinges upon the theoretical relation between Arendt and Heidegger.

private and public space. In particular, for Heidegger, memory was not possible without the ground of forgetting.⁴⁰³ Therefore, memory can assume ontological signification only to the extent that it recalls what has fallen into forgetfulness.⁴⁰⁴ In view of this, I shall reinterpret Arendt's two-fold function of the *polis* as a space of appearance and a space of remembrance. I shall demonstrate that these two modes of space are anchored in human existence as recipients and providers of the world of appearances and memory. This enables the constitutive human capacities of acting and shining, witnessing and memorizing as ways of worlding by transcending. Thus I understand human existence, with the capacity to world by remembering, as the carrier of the *polis*.

6.1 The *polis* as an historical site

According to Heidegger, the city-state as 'state' [*staaf*] or city-state [*Stadtstaaf*], was a 'notorious' translation of *polis*⁴⁰⁵ because city and state are two "inappropriate characterizations" of *polis*.⁴⁰⁶ Instead, Heidegger understood *polis* as an "historical site" [*Stätte*]:⁴⁰⁷

Polis means, rather, the site [*die Stätte*], the there [*Da*], wherein and as which historical *Da*-sein is. The polis is the historical site [*Geschichtsstaette*], the there in which, out of which, and for which history happens [*Geschichte geschieht*]. (IM, 162)

Polis is a *polos*, a pole and an axis around which everything turns. And *polis* is

⁴⁰³ Heidegger claimed that "memory is possible on the ground of forgetting and not the contrary" (SZ, 339). Barash coined the term "existential futurism" to describe Heidegger's "foundation of ontology on the condition of mortality and, consequently, on future being-toward-death". (176)

⁴⁰⁴ Thus, the authenticity of decision not only designates disengaging oneself from immersion in everyday forgetfulness, or even to the present in which action is engaged, but also to Dasein's anticipation of the future.

⁴⁰⁵ Citing Jacob Burckhardt, Heidegger agreed that Nietzsche "still thought the essence of the Greek world and of its *polis* in a Roman way". Before making a clarification of the being-nonbeing distinction, Heidegger embarked on a hermeneutic retrieval of *polis* from the Roman translation as *res publica*, and it is in no way orthodox.

⁴⁰⁶ "For it is like trying to 'explain' the fresh leaf of the tree by means of the foliage fallen on the ground." (p.94)

⁴⁰⁷ Heidegger seldom spoke of the *polis*, however, in *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935), *Parmenides* (1942-1943) and *The Question of Technology* (1949), he did speak of it. Obviously, *polis* as an historical site is quite different from the metaphysical understanding of *polis* as extension of spatiality and temporality.

also a *topos*, or a place for “the history of Greek humanity”.⁴⁰⁸ Place is not yet a space, which has more profound implications and broader applications. Space is an abstract concept founded on extension. Cartesian mathematics is premised on abstract space which plays a crucial role in analytic geometry. For Heidegger, ‘space’ could be rethought – in a non-Cartesian way – in terms of the understanding of ‘place’ or ‘market place’. So, as a *topos*, *polis* is the condition around which beings appear as such.

To justify the translation of *polis* as ‘historical site’, Heidegger retold the story of Plato’s cave-leaver. The crucial point is that Er’s journey is a homecoming, rather than a one-way ticket of departure for good. The question is: from where does Er come back? Here is the story:

Every actual *πόλις* occurs historically on earth *ἐνθάδε* – here. Man’s ‘course of life’ runs through a circuit that is locally and temporally delimited and is a path within this circuit, a *Περίοδος*, and indeed one that is *θανατοφόρος*, mortal, bearing death and therefore leading to death. Death brings the present course to a close, but it is not the end of the Being of a man. Death initiates a transition from the here, *ἐνθάδε*, to the there, *ἐχεί*. This transition is the beginning of a journey which itself again comes to a close in a transition to a new *Περίοδος θανατοφόρος*. The question is therefore: what would a person’s surroundings be, what would remain for him, after he brought to a close the present mortal course here on earth?⁴⁰⁹

Significantly, the story of Er was Heidegger’s narration of Plato’s cave theory, etymologically traceable in the concept of *eudaimonia* and methodologically built within Heidegger’s hermeneutics. For Heidegger translated Er not as ‘philosopher’ but, as Hermes, the ‘messenger’.⁴¹⁰ Given this, Heidegger’s hermeneutic conviction began with a re-interpretation of the story of Er. It begins after Er’s death on the battlefield. He ascended from ‘here’,

⁴⁰⁸ See Heidegger, *Parmenides*, “*Polis* is the *topos*, the pole, the place around which everything appearing to the Greeks as beings turns in a peculiar way ... The pole, as this place, lets beings appear in their Being and show the totality of their condition.” p. 89.

⁴⁰⁹ Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 96.

⁴¹⁰ For Heidegger, the cave dweller who leaves and returns to the Cave is a medium or messenger.

out of the cave of human affairs, to 'there' and came back to life again. He recalled what he saw and heard at the 'demonic' place, as he described it.⁴¹¹ Under the façade of rather commonplace folklore, this passage is significant in terms of the interpretive possibility which Heidegger explored on his own. Here, I consider Heidegger's narrative of Er's journey as referring to the 'non-being' in order to prove the 'being'. Thus, I read this passage in the light of the question: 'Why is there something instead of nothing?'

This could equally be a myth of a journey to 'there' in the afterlife (death) based on a perspective of 'here' on earth (*polis*). In the light of the story of Er, *daimonia* was originally understood as something beyond and a transcendental there.⁴¹² However, this mode of a transcendental 'there' is an unreachable threat to life 'here' on earth since Christianity renders *daimon* as 'demon', something 'demonic' and 'evil.' In Christian belief, the demonic is "equivalent to the devilish", which is a violation of the principles of good citizenship.⁴¹³ In this regard, Heidegger satirized philosophers as those who not only have knowledge of the demonic, but also violate the Christian sense of good citizenship by not doing any 'good' to the city because they are engaging with 'astounding', 'excessive' and yet 'difficult' pursuits by staying away from life.⁴¹⁴

Even so, Heidegger's hermeneutic interpretation was distinct from that of both theologians and philosophers who deem *polis* to be a springboard or transition which lifts human beings enabling them to transcend to some divine territory which is out of human reach: the other shore, the city of God or the ideal (*eidōs*). In particular, this is the reason why Heidegger rejected the Roman

⁴¹¹ Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 98-99.

⁴¹² In *Being and Time*, like the philosophical wonder, Heidegger attributed the alien anxiety and uneasiness one feels *uncanny*, which also means "not-being-at-home" [*das Nicht-zuhause-sein*]. In stark contrast with the state of being-at-home of the average everyday publicness of the 'they' [*das Man*], "which brings tranquilized self-assurance", uncanniness pursues Dasein constantly and threatens its tranquility of lostness in the 'they'. Among other translations, Heidegger translated *daimonia* by *unheimlich*, "the uncanny." *Daimonia* should be uncanny, extraordinary and cannot be explained by the ordinary everydayness of Dasein.

⁴¹³ Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 100.

⁴¹⁴ He doubted the Christian solution of the 'beyond', because in it lurks the danger of "a conscious or even unconscious Christian interpretation of the thought of Plato." p. 97.

translation of city-state and reiterated that the *polis* contains the “essentially *unpolitical* character of the *politeia*”.⁴¹⁵ In defense of Plato’s *Republic* [*Politeia*], which has long been accused for its utopian quality,⁴¹⁶ Heidegger claimed that instead of being a “plan for the factual”, the *Republic* is a “recollection of the essential”.⁴¹⁷ In fact, utopia is literally *ou-topia*, which means ‘no place’: Plato knew that it could not exist.

In the next section, I shall demonstrate two pairs of essential concepts: 1) *lethe* and *polis*: forgetting and *polis*, and 2) *aletheia* and *truth* and *polis/apolis*. For one thing, the essence of *polis* is grounded in the essence of *aletheia*: the truth of being can be sought from *polis*, which is as essential as *aletheia*. As an abode, the *polis* gathered into itself the unconcealedness of beings. For another, *lethe* means the forgetting of being. The provenance of the essence of *lethe* is the provenance of the nocturnal. Heidegger took a classical example of the existence of nothingness: in the dark, “there is ‘nothing’ to see” but we are so certain that “the very world itself is *still* ‘there’ and is ‘there’ *more obtrusively*”. (BT, 188-90)⁴¹⁸ The significance of this metaphor is the two intertwined aspects of transcendence: there is something in us or there is something out there, which we simply cannot tell.

On the one hand, human beings are capable of feeling nothing. The metaphor of the veiling of night reiterates the obtrusiveness of the dark which we experience to highlight the fact that forgetting means disappearing from our sense organs, say, our sight. But we still watch knowing that a something is there. The nebulosity of *lethe* refers to its own concealment because it is cloud-like and signless. So, the night of *lethe* hides and withdraws but this does not mean there is nothing out there.

⁴¹⁵ Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p. 94.

⁴¹⁶ The word ‘Utopia’ was coined by Thomas More for an unachievable ‘no-place or ‘nowhere’, but it comes from Plato’s *Politeia*.

⁴¹⁷ Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p.95.

⁴¹⁸ There is nothing to see in the world that is still far away ‘there,’ at least not here on earth, and it becomes even more obtrusive and unfathomable.

On the other hand, the 'obtrusiveness' we feel when we try to get 'there' is itself the confirmation of our own existence – as “locally and temporally delimited” – as being on the earth for a period of time (*periodos*, literally 'along the road'). That is to say, when we look into the dark night, the obtrusiveness which we experience confirms our finitude and in turn, our finitude testifies to the infinite. Surely, the being designates the human being and the course of human life “runs a circuit” which is 'locally and temporally delimited'. In this regard, being mortal means to bear death and therefore leads to death. So instead of mourning how human life is limited by place and length, Heidegger was instead positively celebrating how death seems not to end everything but to harbour and nurture possibilities. Without the human, the *polis* is nothing; and without the *polis*, the human is nothing (IM, 161-162).

In view of this, *lethe* does not necessarily mean that there is nothing left for us to remember. On the contrary, as long as we identify the veiling and forgetting, we are even more curious about things under the veiling and things which might have been forgotten. According to Heidegger, *lethe*, as a forgetting, drives the human away from the essence of *polis*.⁴¹⁹ As long as we forget, we are banished from our home. So, the essence of *polis* as an historical site is the human capacity to remember. The significance of this human capacity to remember is that I can find myself in the world which I share with others, and I can navigate and locate myself among others in the flow of time into the past and the future.

Thus, as carrier of memory, human beings are themselves the site of history as long as they can think and speak; and the truth (the site) of the *polis* is the un-forgetting (history). Notably, in *The Origin of the Work of Art*, Heidegger defined history not “as a sequence in time of events” but “the

⁴¹⁹ Heidegger, *Parmenides*. p.88. Heidegger tried to elicit the essence of *lethe* out of Hesiod's *Theogony* and Pindar's *Odes*. *Lethe* “tears things and man away from unconcealedness ... in such a manner that the one who forgets dwells within a realm in which beings are withdrawn and man himself is withdrawn from beings; and even this reciprocal withdrawal, as a relation, is withdrawn from unconcealedness.”

transporting of a people into its appointed task as entry into a people's *endowment*."⁴²⁰ I might interpret this people's endowment as the endowment that empowered humans to world. This is one exemplar of the transcendental dimension of human existence which I have been investigating throughout this thesis. History, which unfolds within the site of the *polis*, is capable of transporting human existence into the ineffable experiences which are accesses to the realm of the supersensible.

What Heidegger described as history and historical therefore refers to the primordial relation between *polis* and being. Heidegger's analysis of the *polis* underlined his understanding of the finitude of human existence, in the sense that human beings are finite and temporal and therefore absurd and homeless.⁴²¹ In this regard, the discussion of *polis* forms part of an analysis of the nature of humans as "the strangest, uncanniest (*das Unheimlichste*) of all beings" who are "under way in all directions, on the way to nothing".⁴²² Mortality determines the existential absurdity and homelessness on this planet. The only way out of this absurdity is to take human beings as passing not toward *nothing* – being-toward-death, but to somewhere other than nothingness.⁴²³ Here, nothing is not no-thing, but the very possibility of being human, in this sense, as death. In view of this, man finds himself homeless on the earth and in search of a dwelling, only to end up in the *polis*, some quasi-hospitality. Heidegger thus revived this pre-*polis* Greek understanding of human being which had been lost since the history of the written word. All that is left to us is language, which carries the original memory of the authentic understanding and experiences. In other words, history – the site of memories – records the primordial relation

⁴²⁰ See Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, pp.201-2, italics by the current author.

⁴²¹ Heidegger's reading of Sophocles's tragedy *Antigone* in *An Introduction to Metaphysics* echoes the absurdity and homelessness.

⁴²² I find Elden's translation inspiring so I have followed his version here. ELDEN, S. 2000. Rethinking the Polis: Implications of Heidegger's Questioning the Political. *Political Geography*, 19, 407–422..

⁴²³ *Ibid.* Elden interpreted Heidegger's translation as "man is everyw here a path for being, but is therefore flung out of all paths, essentially homeless, unfamiliar."

between the *polis* and man.⁴²⁴

Now we can return to the translation of *polis* as 'city-state' which, for Heidegger, was unable to "capture the entire essence".⁴²⁵ Rather, *polis* names the site, 'the there' or 'the here', as it were, "wherein and as which historical *Da-sein* is" (IM, 162). Human history happens in, out of and for the site of the *polis*. Provided that the historical site, first and foremost, belongs to "the temples, the priests, the celebrations, the games, the poets, the thinkers, the ruler, the council of elders, the assembly of the people, the armed forces, and the ships" which do not first belong to the *polis* but come to it through their constitution of the *polis* (IM, 162).⁴²⁶ In this regard, the *polis* exists in order to realize the possibility of death: a human transcendence. Otherwise, human existence would be absurd and homeless. We would be haunted by questions about our own existence, such as "what would a person's surroundings be, what would remain for him, after he brought to a close the present mortal course here on earth?" (IM, 162). For one thing, the *polis* happens here, on the earth, within the cave; for another, mortal man's sojourn here does not necessarily end here, but has the capacity to endure and outlive his biological life.

In summary, therefore, the story of the messenger Er shows us that *eudaimonia* is achievable, because the truth of the *polis* is unforgetting. Heidegger therefore took the *polis* as the site of human history – the memory of human existence.

⁴²⁴ Also, it should be a way of life which seeped into and infiltrated Greeks' life.

⁴²⁵ Thus *polis* is neither a city nor a state, nor the combination of both, but the "place of the history of Greek humanity" or the "settlement [*Ort-schaft*] of the historical dwelling of Greek humanity". See Heidegger, *Parmenides*, p.90.

⁴²⁶ For example, from an archeological perspective, conducive to a sense of belonging together, the temple may be another possible symptom of the emergence of the actual *polis* in the eighth century BC. See, COLDSTREAM, J. N. 2006. Various Approaches Towards the Greek "Polis". *Hermathena*, 181, 7-23.

6.2 The modern loss of the *polis*

As Jeffrey Andrew Barash rightly argued that it is through an analysis of Arendt's concept of remembrance that "an implicit but very significant critique of the general orientation of Heidegger's *Existenzphilosophie* (existential philosophy) comes to light".⁴²⁷ In this section, I shall show how Heidegger's unique perspective on the *polis* sheds light on Arendt's existential interpretation of the transcendental dimension of human existence. I shall reconstruct Arendt's account of the modern loss of the political for which the *polis* is one analogue – a two-fold 'nowhere' both in time and in space. As a 'space', Arendt might have thought about the question of 'nowhere', other than 'nobodyness', as the modern existential anxiety.

Canovan showed that the Greek *polis* was understood as a potential response to the problem of modernity, and particularly totalitarianism, as Arendt's first concept of the *polis* was found in *The Origin of Totalitarianism* in 1951.⁴²⁸ Through the 1950s, Arendt's concept of the *polis* clearly evolved, especially in *The Human Condition* (1958) where she regarded it as the very possibility of the 'political' and not merely as a paradigm for western political organizations or modern politics.⁴²⁹

However, it should be noted that Arendt's revisiting of the *polis* was not aiming at capturing the authentic or pure original meaning of the term—a

⁴²⁷ BARASH, J. A. 2002. Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Remembrance. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 10, 171-182..

⁴²⁸ David Marshal (2010) traced fragments chronologically in Arendt's *Denktagebuch* in order to give an account of the origin and development of Arendt's conception of the *polis* as space of appearance from the early 1950s, somewhere between her publication of *The Origin of Totalitarianism* (1951) and *The Human Condition* (1958). See also Mary Dietz on Arendt and the holocaust. DIETZ, M. G. 2012. Between Polis and Empire: Aristotle's Politics. *American Political Science Review*, 106, 275-293.

⁴²⁹ Recent studies have shown that Arendt's conception of the *polis* as "space of appearance" was not completed overnight; instead, it was a process of how Arendt developed her political thought. CANOVAN, M. 1994. *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press. In that period, Arendt provided new dimensions and made specific use of the concept of the *polis*. Canovan commented that Arendt's theory of action was rooted in her "response to totalitarianism and is not an exercise in nostalgia for the Greek polis." p.2.

sentiment of nostalgia (which may or may not come from Heidegger's influence). Just as Villa correctly pointed out that, the Greek *polis* has a paradigmatic significance in Arendt's writing and is represented in a politically romanticized way, but this is "no exercise in nostalgia."⁴³⁰ But rather, Arendt was aiming at discovering the past anew in order to shed light onto the present. Arendt's critique of the Athenian *polis* is precisely manifesting her concern for political permanence of political institution, which suggests that origins, however authentic, need augmentation. One might even say: we need to transcend those origins or, as advised in the Benjamin essay, to do violence to them.

What Arendt discovered the past anew is that she noticed the rarity of freedom as a political phenomenon (not just concept) had emerged within Greek *polis*. As she said, "Freedom as a political phenomenon was coeval with the rise of the Greek city-states." (OR, 23) For Arendt, the political phenomenon of freedom is coeval with the emergence of self-government. For the notion of *isonomia* as no-rule has nothing to do with the structure of rulers/ruled of the political organization, as perceived since Herodotus. (OR, 23) Rather, the political freedom Arendt advocates is a "spatial construct" that allow speech and action among equals. (PP, 119) After all, "the *raison d'être* of politics is freedom and its field of experience is action." (BPF, 145) Freedom is not possible without a political space, as a space in-between and space of appearance, where human beings could have access to talk about public affairs and participate in the decision-making process, and the founding of political institutions. Thus, according to Arendt, "the polis was supposed to be an *isonomy*, not a democracy." (OR, 23) In her analysis of the polis, what she was aiming for was not to recuperate the past *per se*, but rather, the past may have undergone a sea change and violence must be done in wrenching the heavy tradition away in order to get the "pearls and corals" of the polis. In short, the loss of *polis* does not imply any nostalgic tendencies.

⁴³⁰ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. pp.3-4.

I argue that, slightly distancing herself from Heidegger's existential-ontological claim, Arendt made a phenomenologically political claim regarding the spatial connotation of the *polis*. Arendt wondered how 'nowhere', as a logical starting point, could be 'located' within the world's phenomenal settings, because the world can be presented by human existential finitude insofar as the world "in which we enter, appearing from *nowhere*, and from which we disappear into a *nowhere*" exists. In this regard, "*Being and Appearing coincide*" (LM, I:19, original italics); because, finitude human beings *can* perceive the invisible: death, afterlife, changing or unchanging. In that case, human existence is a 'worldly', in contrast to a 'natural' or 'earthly', phenomenon with two worldly events: birth and death.⁴³¹ The two-fold nowhere into which we enter and from which we disappear, is what the world provides for our sojourn being at-home on earth.

At any rate, during Arendt's lifetime, human beings were uprooted from the earth: in 1957, "an earth-born object made by man was launched into the universe," and "mankind will not remain bound to the earth forever" (HC, 1). The superiority of modern detachment took humans away from the earth, either treating the earth as a temporary sojourn or a colony, or behaving like the master of the earth. Arendt was shocked by the 'at-all-costs' tendency of self-destruction. Since then, human beings began a journey of wandering in the solar system, even the cosmos. Since then, human beings are always ready to desert or be deserted by the earth, to leave the earth for good, and perhaps one day in the future to found a new civilization on another planet. Today, the possibility of conquering Mars is no longer scientific fiction, but a reality. Mars might be our next potential site of existence, an alternative home, after the earth has been totally ruined, for example by pollution, nuclear war, or even a

⁴³¹ "We are the sort of beings who see and are seen and for whom appearing is active, a vital element of existence. For us, being is appearing. As living beings we are not accidentally located in the world but belong to the world even as it belongs to us." See YOUNG-BRUEHL, E. & ARENDT, H. 2004. *For Love of the World*, Yale University Press New Haven London. p.319. "Worldliness is the condition produced and fed into the life to the activity of work or fabrication. Men make a world upon earth, and each durable addition to this world becomes part of the human condition of worldliness."

pandemic virus.⁴³² Vision like this, identified by Arendt as ‘earth alienation,’ strikes me by the fact that more and more human beings are losing sight of the earth as our birthright legacy. In Arendt’s political phenomenology, ‘nowhere’ plausibly described uprootedness from familiar mother earth and the tradition which constitutes the spatial-temporal structural dislocation of modern human beings.

As discussed above, access to the question of nowhere, just like the question of nothingness and nobodyness, belongs to the realm of thinking. ‘Nowhere’ designates an emphatic sense of homelessness and the early rise of a cosmopolitan spirit among philosophers (LM, I:199) Thinking not only comes up with abstract concepts, but also with the ‘essence’ of density and distillations; but an “essence cannot be localized”. With its universal validity, essence can be applied everywhere, so actually in a spatial ‘nowhere’. Nevertheless, the question of nowhere is fundamentally an existential one. Nowhere does not trace the ‘wherefrom’ or ‘whereto’ of human life, as religion and philosophy do. Rather, in Heidegger’s fundamental ontology, the word ‘nowhere’ admits that our existence is “locally and temporally delimited” as “absurd and homeless”. Confronted by the experience of the absurdity of nowhere, we begin acquire a sense of awe and piety toward nature, toward the earth, and toward other human beings.

I believe, Arendt’s idea of the public space – as the space in-between – is unthinkable without the ontological and existential dimension of human beings themselves as access (or platform) to the phenomenal world. Therefore, what I designate as ‘modern loss of the polis’ must be understood within this context: modern human beings are in danger of being denied access to the world, just like the scenario that Athenian citizens were denied access to participating public affairs. They were deserted as *a-polis*, either by being excluded from the walls of the city or secluded within the four walls of household, said Arendt (PP,

⁴³² For evidence of this, Google ‘Musk’ and ‘Tesla’.

119).

The difference between *polis* and in-between is the sense that the former is constituted with specific boundaries – walls and laws – to legitimize and distinguish between membership and non-membership, citizenship and non-citizenship; whilst the latter is an invisible common space which constitutes the web of human relationships to relate and separate people. The phenomenon of the loss of the in-between is not as simple as the loss of the *polis*—being ousted, exiled, forced to endure the loss of home. Rather, loss of the in-between is more like a grand scheme of turning the light off in an already crowded and dark place. The in-between is the invisible string which helps human beings establish and navigate within the web of human relationships. Its loss entails abysmal nihilism, a modern syndrome which afflicts modern men and women.

It is the “irrevocably given” of the finitude of human existence by birth and death that grants a sense of endless time which stretches into the past and the future:

“Man’s finitude, irrevocably given by virtue of his own short time span set in an infinity of time stretching into both past and future, constitutes the infrastructure, as it were, of all mental activities” (LM, I:200-1).

Key here is that the ‘nowhere’ does not suggest a spatial somewhere, but describes an empty ‘nobodyness’ like a no-man’s land where there are no human observers of the phenomenal world who are capable of eavesdropping and even transgressing the traditionally forbidden area of the transcendental presupposed in traditional ontology and theology. In order to prevent such nobodyness, Arendt introduced the notion of a spectator with the full capacity of human sense organs, in order to testify the “law of the earth”: plurality: “Not Man but men inhabit this planet”; “Nobody exists in the singular”; Nothing and nobody exists in this world without a spectator: “Everything that is is meant to be perceived by somebody” (LM, I:19).

In sum, the modern loss of the *polis* describes the lost sense of a true relationship between man and the city. To particularize the ontological

existential dimension of human experiences of nowhere, I re-construct the two-fold uprootedness of human beings from the soil which nourishes human existence – the earth and the tradition – which is accountable for the lost *polis*.

6.3 Polis: the site of human existence

Having recognized the tremendous transformation regarding the modern loss of the *polis*, Arendt looked to the concept of the *polis* in order to recover some sense of the human.⁴³³ The question is, how did Arendt, following Heidegger, engage in retrieving the original perception of the *polis* from a pre-political or pre-metaphysical world? In this section, I shall revisit Arendt's critique of how the *polis* as city state is understood in traditional metaphysics, and how this way of thinking affects the modern perception of city-building in the mode of the modern *homo faber*: designing and fabricating.

Arendt blamed Plato, one of the most important figures in western philosophy, for building the foundation of the modern perception of the *polis*. First, for Plato a city is *made*, not born or being there naturally. So the city is just an imitation, a work of art. For Plato, the *polis* become the product of design and fabrication, out of a blueprint called *eidos* the ideal form. More pivotal for Arendt's theory of action is that the tradition of substituting fabricating (or making) for acting has its origin in Plato, whereas it was Aristotle who differentiated *praxis* as acting from *poiesis* as making because the latter could not constitute a *bios* or "an autonomous and authentically human way of life" at all (HC, 12-13).⁴³⁴

⁴³³ Obviously, Arendt still had faith in the human capacity to carry the ancient wisdom of our ancestors from Greek and Roman antiquity. She still trusted the wisdom of the original meaning of concepts, as well as life experiences which gave rise to the meanings. Arendt turned to Greek and Roman antiquity to retrieve and re-vitalize what has been abandoned by metaphysical and philosophical tradition, in order to shed light on modern human conditions. Arendt's classical resources are well accepted among scholars.

⁴³⁴ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. In Chapter 7, 'The Oblivion of Praxis', Villa linked the *polis* with the act of radical *poiesis*, the artwork of statesman, by quoting Heidegger's short comments on the *polis* in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, that the *polis* is "the place, the there, wherein and as which historical being-there is. The *polis* is the historical place, the

Second, the finitude and non-freedom of the human condition is vividly depicted in the cave: humans were chained and fettered in a dark and narrow cave. The reason for the emergence of the *polis* is that men are not self-sufficient but need external references and resources to substantiate their own existence.⁴³⁵ For Plato, the *polis* was an artificial product of conditioned, finite human beings. Arendt criticized Plato's cave parable for not only rejecting a tradition which was hostile toward, but also questioned the validity of metaphysical certitude in the realm of human affairs.

Third, the *polis* serves as a way of a life for philosophers, who should, albeit reluctantly, rule the city, so that the city is depicted as a ruled-ruler framework. For Arendt, the cave leaver was the philosopher who gained his freedom by chance.⁴³⁶ So the city has to be erected in order to preserve and protect the philosopher as well as to educate and illuminate other cave dwellers (HC, 14). The philosopher-king commands the city just as "the soul commands the body, the reason commands the passions" (HC, 224). Arendt sought to explore the metaphysical model of the *polis* which was based on Plato's first dividing line between thought and action, between the ruler and the ruled.

Heidegger's rejection of the metaphysical interpretation of *polis* is clear. Take the creation of works of art as an example: Michelangelo's sculptures were created by removing what was *not* the statue: "he allowed the statue to come to appearance" rather than create a prefigured Platonic ideal (*eidos*) in the mind of the artist. This was Heidegger's understanding of the *polis*: to let it be and allow things to show and withdraw at the same time; rather than build the *polis* as the ruler wishes.⁴³⁷ From this perspective, the *polis* was constituted by free citizens rather than by subjects under the rule of some tyranny or autocracy.⁴³⁸

there in which, out of which, and for which history happens." (p.222)

⁴³⁵ Plato, *Republic*, 369.

⁴³⁶ What Plato regarded a sudden or divine 'wonder', Aristotle regarded it as simply luck or chance.

⁴³⁷ Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, p.55.

⁴³⁸ See STRONG, T. 2016. Heidegger, the *Pólis*, the Political and *Gelassenheit*. *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 47, 157-173. In view of this, Strong re-evaluated Heidegger's term

“The Greek polis *will* continue to exist at the bottom of our political existence – that is, at the bottom of the sea – for as long as we use the word ‘politics’” (MDT, 204).⁴³⁹

For Heidegger, Plato caused concealment and forgetfulness, or *aletheia*. Similarly, according to Arendt, Plato laid the foundation of the metaphysical tradition which misunderstood, even ‘misused’ the *polis*. Both attempted to reveal and restore the authentic meaning of being or *polis*: a lost treasure since Plato discarded it.

In contrast to Plato, Arendt and Heidegger preferred Aristotle, who regarded the *polis* as something which has a life comprising its organic birth, growth and eventual decay. Indeed, the Aristotelian conception of *zoon politikon*⁴⁴⁰ indicates that the very existence of *polis* is natural [*phusikos*] and for the highest good [*agathon*].⁴⁴¹ The natural development of a *polis* includes the smallest unit - an individual man, to a household [*oikos*], a village and a city.⁴⁴² Moreover, in being organized for the sake of the highest good, the *polis* makes possible *eudaimonia*, the pinnacle and ultimate end of politics, as suggested by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Eudaimonia is often understood as the good life, human good, or human flourishing in classical political thinking: *eu* means good and *daimonia* is a kind of spirit or demon. Aristotle believed that the way to achieve *eudaimonia* is to

Gelassenheit to strengthen the point that human beings are in danger of living under the existing knowledge system and the human structures of categories which they impose on the world and are being imposed on, such as modern technology. In this regard, I think that Strong captured the subtle difference between the metaphysical and existential (or fundamental ontological) treatment of Heidegger’s understanding of the *polis*.

⁴³⁹ The *polis* stands at the centre of Arendt’s seminal contribution to political theory – namely *The Human Condition*. In that text, the Greek *polis* represents the very possibility of politics itself.

⁴⁴⁰ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1260b:40-1261a:1. Cited by MANVILLE, P. B. 1990. *In Search of the Polis. The Origins of Citizenship in Ancient Athens*. Princeton University Press. p. 38.

⁴⁴¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252a:1 “Observation shows us, first, that every city [*polis*] is a species of association [*koinonia*], and, secondly, that all associations come into being for the sake of some good”. “When we come to the final and perfect association, formed from a number of villages, we have already reached the polis”. (*Politics*, 1252b27) When it comes into self-sufficiency, the *polis* reached its fulfilment. In another word, *polis* exists, for the sake of good life, instead of mere life. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252b29. “The *polis* comes into existence for the sake of living, but remains for the sake of living well.”

⁴⁴² KEYT, D. 1987. Three Fundamental Theorems in Aristotle’s “Politics”. *Phronesis*, 54-79. [*ho anthropos phusei politikon zoon*] CHERRY, K. & GOERNER, E. A. 2006. Does Aristotle’s Polis Exist “By Nature”? *History of Political Thought*, 27, 563–585.

lead a *polis* life.⁴⁴³ However, what the good life consists of and how to achieve it are two polemical questions which have never been settled in political thinking. The most popular opinion is consistent with modern hedonists' advocacy of the wellbeing of biological life and the sensual pleasures which the good life brings.⁴⁴⁴

Significantly, Arendt offered her phenomenological interpretation of *daimon*, which is consistent with her political philosophy. In Greek religion, a *daimon* is a kind of spiritual being which is hidden from the person but "accompanies each man throughout his life, always looking over his shoulder from behind and thus visible only to those he encounters" (HC, 181), whereas Arendt understood *eudaimonia* as 'life' itself. For her, just as the human, *eudaimonia* cannot be translated since it is "neither happiness nor beatitude"; rather, *eudaimonia* can only be indicated:

It has the connotation of blessedness, but without any religious overtones, and it means literally something like well-being of the *daimon* who accompanies each man throughout his life, who is his distinct identity, but appears and is visible only to others." (HC, 193)

Arendt's interpretation of *eudaimonia* shares an affinity with Heidegger's. Both were cautious about the theological tendency, admitting it as a blessing and a unconcealment but without the "religious overtone". The revelatory quality of *daimon* has nothing to do with happiness, but is more of a fulfillment of the blessing. In this regard, we could refer to the Socratic meaning of *eudaimonia* as an inversion of the modern understanding as 'happiness', which was not an end in itself, but merely a sign: "It was the signal that one was in the activity or state in which all is well with one's *daimon*", as Norton suggested.⁴⁴⁵ Turning

⁴⁴³ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252a:1 "Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good; for mankind always act in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good." "To be fellow citizens is to be sharers in one polis, and to have one polis is to have one place of residence."

⁴⁴⁴ Aristotle, as a philosopher, regarded the *polis* as an ethical way of life.

⁴⁴⁵ NORTON, D. 1969. *Daimons and Human Destiny Michigan State University Press*, 13, 154-165.

to one's *daimon* means turning to one's self. The Greek humanistic integrity was to be true and consistent to oneself.

The self-consistency of *eudaimonia* not only addresses the Greek ethics which each individual man and woman must apply, but also represents a "monumental achievement" in the Greek tragic perspective. Homer and Hesiod recorded those achievements which constitute destiny, which was pictured as "a direction, a route, a vector" which points in two paradigmatic directions: to overwhelming success and to irredeemable failure.⁴⁴⁶ Such fatefulness as a vector is human life: life with its uniqueness and distinctness. To prove the statement that the "good life is life itself", Arendt gave the example of the heroic deeds and words of Achilles in an attempt to show that "*eudaimonia* can be bought only at the price of life". Here, Arendt secretly replaced *eudaimonia* with "immortal fame" (HC, 194). Therefore, the *polis* is always constituted or institutionalized by founding, saving, conserving, preserving or prolonging the political status of humanity.

In view of this, Arendt took the *polis* as the site of remembrance: the collective memory of human beings who create and keep memory from generation to generation:

The polis, properly speaking, is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lie between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be ... Wherever you go, you will be a polis." (HC, 198)

In this sense, I shall distinguish 'polis as being human' from 'polis as its men', or a distinction between citizens and subjects.⁴⁴⁷ The basic presupposition is

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid. 158.

⁴⁴⁷ MANVILLE, P. B. 1990. *In Search of the Polis. The Origins of Citizenship in Ancient Athens*. Princeton 245

that human beings – every *Dasein* for Heidegger and every newcomer and acting agent for Arendt – are greeted by a pre-established world either by birth or by initiation. This world is already erected and contextualized before we are born. Thus living humans are the space of remembrance which provides the identity of the city.⁴⁴⁸ Furthermore, the association of *polis* with politics arises from the urge for immortality, namely, the possibility of transcending the earthly existence.⁴⁴⁹ The *polis* exists to record traces of human of existence.⁴⁵⁰

Through the *polis*, Arendt did not simply search for the fame or glory which are attached to great deeds and words, but for the deeds and words themselves, most significantly, those which are remembered. The recorded words and deeds are the antidote to the “futility of individual life”. They are recorded in the name of the *polis* (as well as the Roman *res publica*) as “the space that [is] protected against this futility and reserved for the relative permanence, if not immortality, of mortals” (HC, 56), because if they are not, any great speeches or actions would be drowned in the deluge of time. So the futility of unremembered words and deeds is meaningless in every sense.⁴⁵¹ In this regard, I believe that Arendt was haunted by the same paradox that troubled Jacob Burckhardt – the *polis* allows its citizens to thrive and distinguish themselves and it also sets the boundaries of the city and imposes restrictions on the number of citizens (spatial and numerical compactness), in order to

University Press.

⁴⁴⁸ Similar comments were discussed in Chapter 1, the hermeneutic and phenomenological understanding of the environmental world (*Umwelt*) is our ontological condition, epistemologically and existentially. The national identity in the terms of ‘culture’ and ‘difference’ drew upon post-structuralist terms.

⁴⁴⁹ Standing between the tininess of human life and the greatness of the human capacity to world, long lives the (founding and preserving) *polis*.

⁴⁵⁰ The *polis* can be diminished to a point falling on the time axis in historical text books. A *point* one-dimensionally; worse still, there is no point at all. As a metaphor, there is no pointing *to* because there is no more expansion of a dot to become a two-dimensional arrow. Thus, literally, there is no meaning and no future (promise) at all.

⁴⁵¹ Interestingly, what made sense for the Greeks, and for both Arendt and Heidegger, was the *polis*, the *topos* of human affairs, or what Heidegger called the historical site. Not to be remembered or leaving nothing behind is non-being. The distinction between being and non-being is almost identical with that between *polis* and *a-polis*. But what is *a-polis*? Arendt would reluctantly agree that *a-polis* is outside the cave, belonging to the realm of gods or animals, not man.

guarantee individual distinction (the agonal spirit).

We are now in a position to fully appreciate the two-fold function which Arendt attributed to the *polis* (HC, 197). First, the *polis* is a space of appearance: a place for human strife: to distinguish, to appear and to be at all; and to be human and to thrive were the same because for Arendt the only conditions which both limit and make possible the greatness and the thriving of men, which in Arendt's epistemology as the *telos* of the *polis* were the three activities of human beings: labour, work and action. It is the power of human being, sheer human togetherness, which makes the *polis* the original possibility for founding.⁴⁵² This founding, however, is not a moment which happens in the blink of an eye, but a process emerging from what Arendt called the agonal spirit, the heartbeat of the state by which the citizens of the *polis* are both actors and spectators, watching and performing at the same time.⁴⁵³ In this regard, the *polis* is a space for appearances.

Second, the *polis* is a space of remembrance: a place for sustaining and preserving the established human foundation through remembering. In Arendt's term, the Greek city-state is this kind of common-world or public realm which exists before and after man's entry and exit, and in this sense, it transcends the lifespan of any individual mortal being. For example, in Homeric poetry, the bards and poets were the media for recording and remembering heroic deeds and words in a way which immortalized the heroes of the Trojan War, and therefore placed them in permanent reverence, which can be achievable only by the *vita activa* of mortal human beings who are striving for potential

⁴⁵² See an interesting argument on the role of violence in ASHCROFT, C. 2018. The Polis and the Res Publica: Two Arendtian Models of Violence. *History of European Ideas*, 44, 128-142., where Ashcroft^[1] explored a comparison of the use of political violence in two ancient worlds: ancient Greece and the Roman Republic, typically the *polis* and the *res publica*, in order to revise our understanding of the role of violence in Arendt's understanding of politics.

⁴⁵³ STERNBERGER, D. 1977. The Sunken City: Hannah Arendt's Idea of Politics. *Social Research*, 44, 132-146.

immortality through memories.⁴⁵⁴

In describing the distinction between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, Arendt claimed to appeal to another distinction between immortality and eternity at the very start of *The Human Condition*. According to Arendt, immortality echoes the pre-conceptual articulation of the self-understanding and experiences of ancient Greeks. The Greeks experienced immortality and their own mortality being surrounded by immortal nature and the immortal gods: “Imbedded in a cosmos where everything was immortal, mortality became the hallmark of human existence” (HC, 18). But mortal men are striving, through words and deeds, for an immortality which is recognizable by the life-story from birth to death. Thus Arendt defined immortality as “endurance in time, deathless life on this earth and in this world as it was given” (HC, 18):

The task and potential greatness of mortal life lie in their ability to produce things – works and deeds and words – which would deserve to be and, at least to a degree, are at home in everlastingness, so that through them mortals could find their place in a cosmos where everything is immortal except themselves. (HC, 19)

Therefore, the *vita activa* – by labouring, working and acting – is not in contradiction with striving for immortality as potential greatness. Since Plato, however, “the way of life of the citizens, the *bios politikos*”, began to conflict with eternity and the “way of life of philosopher”. The experience of eternity, according to Arendt’s interpretation of Plato’s cave parable, is outside the cave as human affairs and outside the plurality of men. Decisively, experience of the eternal is “in contradiction to that of the immortal” as it has no relation and cannot be transformed into human activities (HC, 20). So for Arendt, contemplation of the eternal was problematic in respect of achieving potential immortality among mortal men.⁴⁵⁵ To this extent, the *polis* – through the *vita*

⁴⁵⁴ Obviously, I believe, Arendt referred to Greek heroic stories not because they were true recollections of actual human events; she did not regard those heroic ‘words and deeds’ as invented, mythological, or non-existent, but as a part of human memory.

⁴⁵⁵ See RICOEUR, P. 1983. Action, Story and History: On Re-reading The Human Condition. *Salmagundi*, 248

activa – makes a collective memory possible. Through the site of human remembrance, the whole of humankind on the earth can therefore be preserved in the form of the *polis*, and is therefore able to world at all.

The two functions of the *polis* were not merely in the literal sense but bore more figurative and deductive meanings. Arendt never actually treated the *polis* as something present-at-hand, something like a hammer, something which is definable, quantifiable, no matter whether it is a concrete city or an abstract concept. On the contrary, she followed Heidegger in seeing the *polis* as a specific mode of being of human being, an authentic way of life. So what made her political conceptualization of the *polis* uniquely significant was how she referred to the metaphor of space while keeping a distance from the traditional metaphysics: she unfolded and redeemed the experience and phenomenon of the pre-philosophical Greek *polis* to redeem the lost treasure, to re-describe the two functions of the polis as a space of appearance and space of remembrance.

6.4 Remembering: human beings as carriers of the *polis*

I have stated in this thesis that few have taken account of the temporal dimension of the *polis*, but every reputable commentator is strongly aware of how important memory, even “immortal fame”, is in Arendt’s account of the *polis*.

In the earlier discussion of Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation of the *polis*, we had a sense of the Greek wonder at human existence in terms of its two-fold ‘nowhere’. However, with the modern loss of the *polis* as a two-fold uprootedness from our mother earth and traditions, we seem to have lost access to asking the question about nowhere; we have forgotten to question and wonder where we are from and where we are heading.

In reconstructing the two-fold function of the *polis* as the space of appearance and the space of remembrance, Arendt was determined to recover the true understanding of the *polis* as the site of human existence, to restore dignity to the political.

In this final section, I shall further demystify the concept of space and time regarding the *polis* in Arendt's hermeneutic phenomenological reading of antiquity, after Heidegger. I shall then demonstrate why and how human existence, through worlding as remembering, is the carrier of the *polis*. Human being as meta being designates that as carriers of the *polis*, human beings are capable of worlding. And worlding as remembering testifies to human beings as carriers of the *polis*.

Apart from the nostalgic tendency of treating the city of Athens as some kind of figurative and symbolic paradigm, the term itself, as Marshal (2010) believed, is a site of tension between the original denotation of *polis* as a term in Greek antiquity and the various meanings and substantiations subsequently imposed on it. Figuratively, Marshal argued, Arendt's political thinking is full of analogues of the concept of the *polis* as the space of appearance: and her notions of judgment, culture and the concept of *topos* regarding the location of thinking as well.⁴⁵⁶ In view of this, the question of the human is never outdated. What matters most of all is how this question is asked and by whom.

So to accentuate human beings as carriers of memory, I downplay the traditional perception of space in Arendt's account of the *polis* and instead I highlight the significance of the derivative dimension of time, as the hermeneutic horizon of human existence, for a hermeneutic phenomenological understanding of the *polis* as an historical site. The space of remembrance, on the scale of the *polis*, is constituted by historic monuments, history text books

⁴⁵⁶ See Marshal, 2010. The paradigm of Athens or the analogue of the Athenian city-state such as the Roman *res publica*, sophistic antiquity, Herodotus's cultural history, modern historicism, Greek *nomos*, and the councils of the 1956 Hungarian revolution.

or various orally transmitted legends, or even simply ‘traces’ which Schmitt mentioned in his geopolitics, such as landscapes and historical or natural relics.⁴⁵⁷ Those traces are traceable in terms of the local natural condition, geography, topography, natural physiognomy and climate which all have an influence on human activities.

This was the favourite explanation which Arendt used when she associated *polis* with action, since action engages in the founding and preserving of political bodies. *Polis* is a form of human togetherness which assures the least tangible and most ephemeral of human ‘products – deeds and stories. And deeds and stories can transcend the world of appearances and become imperishable:

Men’s life together in the form of the *polis* seemed to assure that the most futile of human activities, action and speech, and the least tangible and most ephemeral of man-made ‘products’, the deeds and stories which are their outcome, would become imperishable. The organized polis, physically secured by the wall around the city and physiognomically guaranteed by its laws, is a kind of organized remembrance. It assures the mortal lack the reality that comes from being seen, being heard, and, generally, appearing before an audience of fellow men. (HC, 197-8)

For Arendt, walls guarantee the physical landscape of the *polis* and laws secure the city physiognomically. The *polis* guarantees a world of reality by setting up an *agora* which enables human beings to be heard and seen in front of an audience of fellow men (HC, 198).

More relevantly in this context, however, Arendt stated that action “creates the condition for remembrance, that is for history” (HC, 8-9). The ancient Greeks experienced the *polis* not as a technological space with width, length

⁴⁵⁷ See SCHMITT, C. 2006. *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*, trans. ULMEN, G. L., Telos Press Publishing. JURKEVICS, A. 2017. Hannah Arendt reads Carl Schmitt’s *The Nomos of the Earth: A Dialogue on Law and Geopolitics* from the Margins. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 16, 345–366.

and height, a square. The *polis* is definitely not just a dot on the timeline in historical text books. Rather, the *polis* for the Greeks had more of a mathematical sense, like a set. Within the set, there were human beings whose activities determined the orbit, scope, purview, span and compass of the *polis* because the original meaning of *polis* was a *topos*, a place for gathering, and human activities gathered people around the *topos* and lent meaning to the place: an empty square is not a *polis*. When human activities thrive, the *polis* becomes a spatial concept with administrative and legislative purposes in the metaphor of walls and laws.

As suggested in Chapter 1, almost every reputable commentator is strongly aware of how important memory, even ‘immortal fame’, is in Arendt’s account of the *polis*. I argue that, the temporal dimension of the *polis* – time – is the measurement of the durability and permanence of the world since it is the transcendental horizon of human existence. Human experience of time belongs to the realm of the supersensible, since it is metaphysically indemonstrable. In other words, we cannot describe with words how to feel, touch, see or taste time directly with our sense organs. This is the reason why Kant categorized human experience of time as immanent and intuitive. However, human beings are capable of calculating and legislating time with both value and measurement. Thus, time, not space, is accountable for the rationale of Heidegger in re-interpreting the *polis* as an historical site, because the *polis* is the site of human existence in a continuously historical sense because the existence of the *polis* testifies to the finitude, fragility and insignificance of human life. Being born mortal, we have an illusion that time is absolute and eternal because there is no beginning and no end. Immemorial time paradoxically seems to provide measurement to mortal beings.

The temporality of human existence, evidenced by the living experiences of time, being born and being mortal, adds an extra temporal dimension to the world for living creatures which pass transiently through a world which “preceded one’s arrival and will survive one’s departure” (LM, I:20). Appearance and disappearance against the permanence of the world, on the level of being

alive, are understood and experienced as the primordial events of birth and death. In contrast is the objective technical time of the world, against which the appearances and disappearances of living beings are to be measured, such as time on the clock as minutes, hours, days, seasons and years. A subjective temporal time, as it were, is understood in terms of the finite span of a human life. The finite lifespan thereby provides a peculiar sense of time, regarding how we experience time as a 'secret prototype' for all time measurements. Arendt took an example of the experience of the length of a year which radically changes throughout our life from childhood to old age. A year is relatively longer for a five-year-old than for someone in their twenties or thirties. But time passes more and more quickly as we get older, until we are old enough to approach our death, when time slows down again because we begin to measure it against the "psychological and somatically anticipated date of our departure" (LM, I:21).

Arendt vividly depicted how we stand on the timeline between past and future, between 'no longer' and 'not yet'. The problem is, however, that in the 'in between' we are not standing firmly in the present. Rather, in the middle of a void and eternal standing-now, we bypass the reality of withering political space, the rise of the social, pervasive reification and the instrumentalization of human being, and we are unable to understand the decline of the political because we are not really present. We therefore need references from the past, which primarily refers to the genuine political experiences and wisdom of Greek and Roman antiquity regarding Western culture. Sensitively, Villa took Arendt's political theory as part of a larger project of remembering the past by reviving the original spirit and underlying phenomenon of concepts. That is to say, we still have the concepts in our hands but we forget (to address) the original meaning and life experiences which gave rise to the meaning of particular concepts. Indeed, particular concepts expressed in Latin offer us access to the originality of the Roman political experiences, including our meta capacity as capacities such as to speak the unspeakable, to found and augment a city out of nothing, to love the world as promising and forgiving, and to inherit and pass down the legacy by remembering. In view of this, Arendt enjoyed the Augustinian idea of how we are situated in time, remembering, collecting and

recollecting in “the belly of memory” by anticipating the planning of the yet-to-come (LM, 201). All these are transcendental capacities of human beings achieved by crossing the lines toward the realm of transcendence, which used to be the privilege of God in the ontological or theological sense.

Moreover, for both Heidegger and Arendt, human existence, as a space of remembrance and a space of appearance, hands over the ineffable experience of time into the visible and sensible. Aristotle understood that the existence of the *polis* was completely dependent on human beings. Thus the *polis* is natural [*phusikos*] and so is human existence. For Aristotle, the genesis and development of the *polis* was just the same as anything which has a life, being born, growing and decaying. Aristotle wrote in the *Politics* that the *polis* is “a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal”.⁴⁵⁸ Thus, in the Greek sense, *polis is as human is*:

To belong to the few ‘equals’ (*homoioi*) meant to be permitted to live among one’s peers; but the public realm itself, the *polis*, was permeated by a fiercely agonal spirit, where everybody had constantly to distinguish himself from all others, to show through unique deeds or achievements that he was the best of all.” (HC, 41)

In the shadow of the *polis*, in the private space, live the slaves, the labourers and the workers. Are they still human? If they are, then in what sense? Instrumental? Animal? Medical? Physiological? Psychological? Philosophical? Politically, they obviously are, but not fully or fundamentally, as Arendt would say.

A man who lived only a *private* life, who like the slave was not permitted to enter the *public* realm, or like the barbarian had chosen not to establish such a realm, was not *fully human*. (HC, 38)

For Arendt, the traditional philosophy could not guarantee that those slaves,

⁴⁵⁸ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253a:2.

workers and labourers would be treated as human. The only solution is institutions and legations. Only the iron law of the city is capable of protecting the warm and tender heart of man, regardless of his profession or social status. Only politics can guarantee workers and labourers to be human at all. They become fully human only because they are treated equally and distinctively within the framework of politics and laws, that is, within the *polis*. In this regard, human beings are not born equal but made equal because the *polis* is “not *made* out of equals, but on the contrary of people who *are* different and unequal”. Thus, the *polis* comes into being by equalizing those who are otherwise unequal, a task which Arendt captured with the word *isasthe-nai*:

“The public realm, in other words, was reserved for individuality; it was the only place where men could show who they really and inexchangeably were” (HC, 45)

In a similar vein, Marshal discussed this issue about the fully human being: the modern “confinement of a being to the process of production and consumption prevented the development of a capacity to be *fully* human”.⁴⁵⁹ Now the idea of being fully human, although it is justifiable in every respect, indeed prevents us from making sense of what it meant for Arendt to be human, because in this reading, only a life with action and speech is regarded as fully or fundamental human, as if there is a mode of being human which is incomplete or superficial. Arendt discussed the issue of slaves in Aristotle. According to Arendt, Aristotle “sees the question not with regard to justice for the slaves – are slaves not just as good as free men, or similar? – or relative to the nature of the slaves, *but rather relative to the condition of human life*” (HC, 37, n66, italics added by the current author). Arendt was not defending Aristotle’s degrading of slaves, rather she was suggesting that the need to labour is the condition of human life:

The realm of the polis ... was the sphere of freedom ... the

⁴⁵⁹ MARSHAL, D. 2010. The Polis and its Analogues in the Thought of Hannah Arendt. *Modern Intellectual History*, 7, 123-149.p.131

household was the condition for freedom of the *polis*. (HC, 30-31)

So again: are workers and labourers human in the political setting? Certainly, yes. They have had their own political identity in the modern world in general since Marx. They are the ones who are actively even ambitiously pursuing their own political existence and political reality in an arena where their existence can be recognised and their voices can be heard. Surely their existence is strongly felt, for the world political stage has witnessed waves of growing influences and catastrophic power in their names. They are humans, but they are also workers and labourers in Marx's theory of social class; the nametag itself is political in nature, representing a group with political power. In this regard, it is tempting to read Arendt's analysis of the human condition as an effort to divide humans hierarchically into different levels or ranks. The real intention was the opposite: Arendt sought to break down the idea of classifying humans into workers or labourers and instead wanted to restore the dignity of humans by demonstrating their activities and conditions, accordingly.

Here, I reiterate the significance of worlding as the human capacity of drawing boundaries in Arendt's account of the *polis*. The *polis* was defined by border marks, such as fortifications, walls, fences and, surely, laws. City-building and law-making are the same in providing the city life with a definite space and texture. Law-making is an indispensable part of founding a new city: "Unlike Schmitt, who takes the metaphor as *building* or *constructing*, Arendt believes the "*myth of founding*."⁴⁶⁰

As discussed above, we are familiar with the world as a space of appearance; so what is the space of remembrance? It is human existence. Human beings are the carriers of the *polis* insofar as the texture of the space is time.

⁴⁶⁰ ELY, J. 1996. The Polis and 'the Political': Civic and Territorial Views of Association. *Thesis Eleven*, 46, 33 - 65. According to Ely, "the presence of a building or construction metaphor signals the central element of a body politic land-based in nature."

Conclusion

Heidegger's constant influence on Arendt's understanding of the human is critical. The polis was interpreted as an historical site, as truth revealing, as a founding activity, as the possibility of immortality, as setting boundaries to an *a-polis*. Arendt later developed and transformed this notion of the *polis* into a more general designation – as the realm of human affairs, the web of human relationships. We have inherited the term *polis* which withstands the erosion of time without deformation not only because it is the origin and essence of classical political thought to which we inevitably keep referring, but also because it represents the ongoing human capacity to transcend as carriers of time. To be human is to appear in front of others, to shine and to be seen through action and speech. Moreover, to be human is to capture and preserve the shining moments of human history and to be remembered, to be told as a story or live alongside the story. To put it simply, to be human is to strive to immortalize. As a space of remembrance, human beings are allegedly the descendants of the gods. Yet, remembering, regarding the preserving of the *polis*, is to transcend the limit of individuals. And Hermes is the divine messenger. The task of politics is not to forget but to protect those who try to understand and remember as they live in the world. Memory is the site of human existence. In remembering, human existence transcends its individual and collective being.

The city, far away from the distant past – with tradition and history, with human origin and foundation, with hope and promises for the future – particularly designates the realization and foundation of the Roman republic based on the model of the Greek *polis*. Furthermore, what motivated Arendt into worrying about the crisis of authority in modernity was not only the break between tradition and modernity, but also the phenomenon of the rule of nobody, when no-one takes the responsibility to *auctor* the city. In the next chapter, I shall further substantiate the argument that human existence is the carrier of time through a Roman concept: *auctoritas*.

7 Auctoritas: Human as Carrier of Time

Today, elderly people seem to be forgotten and abandoned. The information gap cripples and disempowers the old who find it difficult keeping up with the era of data technology. Ignorant of and thus undisturbed by the latest digital devices and applications, old people find this information-driven world often inaccessible. Life becomes more difficult if they do not know how to buy travel tickets online with ID cards and a smart payment system. They might not know how to use Google maps to navigate when the old familiar landscapes become unrecognizable due to constant development of the physical infrastructure. Hence, the older generation can feel useless, vulnerable and marginalized in this rapidly changing world. In the so-called virtual age, it seems that the elderly are increasingly expected to withdraw into a mode of retirement and concealment not only because they are seen to be less appealing but also because they no longer contribute anything to this world. Despite being the carriers of knowledge and experience, the elderly are no longer respected by society as a source of authority which can only be accumulated over time. Now that knowledge and experience are easily obtainable on the internet, the elderly, as the holders of the longest span of earthly time, are no longer irreplaceable.

Arendt worried about the enthusiasm for establishing a new world order – a *novus ordo saeculorum* – by rejecting the old one in her essay ‘The Crisis of Education’ (1968). Such enthusiasm was particularly true and necessary in the settler society of America where education was claimed to produce good citizens and therefore to establish a new world. However, to create a new body politic through education would finally lead to a dreadful Platonic conclusion, “the banishment of all older people from the state which is to be founded”.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁶¹ BOEDEKER, E. C. 2001. Individual and Community in Early Heidegger: Situating das Man, the Man-self, and Self-ownership in Dasein's Ontological Structure. *Inquiry*, 44, 63-99.

The fact is, however, the world into which the newcomers – as newly born human beings or American immigrants – were introduced was an ‘old world’, that is, a “pre-existing world”, which was constituted by the living and the dead, according to Arendt.⁴⁶² Importantly, the term ‘New World’ gained its meaning from the ‘Old World’ (CE, 194).

I argue that the loss of authority is also a loss of the depth of human existence. More relevant in this context is the modern crisis of authority, which means that there is no testimony and no human capacity to initiate, inherit, witness, memorize, augment and preserve a city. In ‘What is Authority?’ (1956), the constant, ever-widening and ever-deepening crisis of authority in the modern world prompted Arendt into thinking about the concept of authority and the political experiences which give rise to it.⁴⁶³ The origin and etymological root of the concept of authority, *auctoritas*, has however been relatively bypassed in Arendtian scholarship.⁴⁶⁴ In this chapter, I shall pursue the hermeneutic phenomenological recovery of *auctoritas* to illustrate how it represents the depth of human existence as being the carrier of time. As carriers of time, human beings are capable of worlding and transcending the individual life.

This chapter is structured as follows. The first section not only rationalizes the methodology of why I turn to Heidegger and classical concepts, but also explains the arrangement of the main structure of the thesis. I shall demonstrate Arendt’s acceptance of Heidegger’s teaching but with a different perspective on Roman antiquity. Without sharing Heidegger’s aloof attitude towards Roman

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*

⁴⁶³ Before ‘What is Authority?’ was included in *Between Past and Future*, it first appeared in the *Review of Politics* in 1956 with original title ‘Authority in the Twentieth Century’.

⁴⁶⁴ There is an exception, HAMMER, D. 2015. Authoring within history: the legacy of Roman politics in Hannah Arendt. *Classical Receptions Journal*, 7, 129–139. Hammer worked on the concept of *auctoritas* and made a thorough and brilliant examination of the tension in the Roman concept of *auctoritas*. According to Hammer, there is no other concept more distinctive to Roman politics and more associated with the Roman senate than *auctoritas*. He explored the ambiguity and tension which lie at the heart of *auctoritas* and of Roman republican politics: the tension between continuity:tradition, and authoring:augmenting. The tension, Hammer believed, “has implications for Arendt’s understanding of participatory politics.”

political thought, Arendt could incorporate seemingly contrasting views. On the one hand, influenced by Heidegger, Arendt traced two Greek concepts – *logos* and the *polis* – to re-evaluate and re-interpret the Aristotelian concept of humans as speaking and political beings, rather than rational and social animals. On the other, she could independently dig up and renovate the precious treasure of Roman tradition and its political wisdom and experiences from *amor mundi* and *auctoritas*. After all, for Arendt, Roman political experiences and wisdom shed light on the modern human condition.

Nevertheless, before we even know what authority *is* or *was*, we are told that we had already lost it, because authority is Roman in origin, not Greek. So in the second section I shall demonstrate how Arendt refuted the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle for failing to provide a conceptual basis for authority which was Roman in origin. I shall also seek explicate the metaphysical dilemma regarding Arendt's concern for the modern crisis of authority: her dubious attitude between mourning and celebrating, nostalgia and relief, comforting and unnerving. I shall also show that this way of reading is still haunted by traditional metaphysics and its ontology, which presuppose an unattainable 'transcendent authority' which lies outside and beyond the human world.

In the third section, in order to shed light on the dilemma of the modern crisis of authority, I shall pursue a hermeneutic phenomenological reading of *auctoritas*. I shall demonstrate how Arendt retained the etymological root of *auctoritas* and the political phenomenon which gave rise to the concept: the Roman Republic. In so doing, instead of appealing to an extramundane transcendence, I shall explore the interpretive potential of Arendt's account of *auctoritas*. I shall argue that the depth of human existence is augmented by understanding and preserving the past. In other words, *auctoritas* is the depth of human existence, so the loss of authority is the loss of the past. The depth of the past determines the moral, ethical, legal and epistemological ground of modern men and woman. This ground is transcendental because it stretches in a temporal dimension which lends permanence and durability to the world. As

an example, I shall introduce how Arendt exemplified the role which the elders and the Senate played in Roman political experience.

In the final section, I shall visualize how time operated, different from the modern perception of time, with regard to the concept of *auctoritas* in the trinity of authority, religion and tradition. I discuss how the Romans conceived the relationship between human existence as a collective whole and temporally structured events. To be human is to world *auctoritas*-ly, that is, to have the power to remember, to bear, to suffer, to endure, to agonize, to strive and to promise a future.

7.1 Beyond Athens: Arendt's response to Heidegger

What I mean by 'beyond' Athens has two senses. First, Arendt did not limit her investigation to Greek Athens: the *polis*. She turned to another exemplar: the founding of the Rome – the *res publica* – and valued the Roman political experience as a relatively successful mode of human togetherness. Second, Arendt did not blindly follow Heidegger's contrasting attitude toward the Greek and Roman worlds. She seems to have taken an idiosyncratic departure from her teacher.

Arendt's reflection on Roman political thought differed from that of Heidegger, who only ever appreciated the historical and theoretical value of the Roman *res publica* as an imitation of the Greek *polis*. He bypassed Rome, ignored Latin translations, returned to the Greek language and even used German as a vehicle for conveying Greek meaning.⁴⁶⁵ He treated Rome as if it had never existed, like an historical blank, as the non-remembered since it does not deserve a name. It was this mode of forgetfulness which for him turned

⁴⁶⁵ Compared with his distrust for the Roman-Latin inheritance, he had more faith in German which he believed contains more information or footprint than Latin.

Roman greatness in regard to its precious political experiences and wisdom, into nothingness.⁴⁶⁶ For Heidegger, Roman civilisation was the culprit responsible for the ossified tradition which we inherited and he believed that there is only one gate between Greek philosophy and Roman civilization, *input* and *acceptance*.

For Heidegger, as a turning point between ancient Greek civilization and the Christian world, Roman civilisation did not significantly change history. Instead, the critical historical juncture was Greek: the beginning and the ending of Greek philosophy. The turning point in the history of thought begins with a process of depreciating the great legacy which the Greeks left. The Romans simply interpreted this juncture as an awkward nuisance. And there is no so-called Roman thinking; there is only one root, the Greeks, because the process of the Latin translation and appropriation of Greek was a process of stabilization and fixation for later understanding. In the *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger wrote that "Greek civilization is always seen in its later form and this itself is seen from a Roman point of view" (BW, 201). Since Rome, western tradition basically took the form as we see today:

Roman thought takes over the Greek words without a corresponding, equally original experience of what they say, without the Greek word. The rootlessness of Western thought begins with this translation.⁴⁶⁷

The root for him was Greek, especially the Greek language. As Barbara Cassin inspiringly observed that for Heidegger, "the relation between Rome and Greece is one of *translation* and *betrayal*",⁴⁶⁸ and apart from the betrayal, for

⁴⁶⁶ The fundamental difference between "the modern republic, the Roman *res publica*, and the Greek *polis* is as essential as that between modern essence of truth, the Roman *rectitudo*, and the Greek *ἀλήθεια*." See Heidegger, *Parmenides*. p.89

⁴⁶⁷ HEIDEGGER, M. 1975b. *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. HOFSTADTER, A., Harper & Row New York. (These essays date from 1935/6) The cited part is originally in italic font. "The process begins with the appropriation of Greek words by Roman-Latin thought ... However, this translation of Greek names into Latin is in no way the innocent process it is considered to this day. Beneath the seemingly literal and thus faithful translation there is concealed, rather, a translation of Greek experience into a different way of thinking." p.23.

⁴⁶⁸ CASSIN, B. 1990. Greeks and Romans: Paradigms of the Past in Arendt and Heidegger. *Comparative*

Heidegger, what is Roman is almost what is modern.⁴⁶⁹ What has been left is the mere sound, not the human voice, the calling of Being.⁴⁷⁰ According to Cassin, although Rome physically defeated and conquered Athens, it was Athens which took action by means of speaking to frame time and to rule. Athens spiritually governed Roman political life by a temporal *logos*.

In contrast, for Arendt, another door existed as the transition from Athens to Rome by recollecting the heritage and looking back to the past in order to re-write the legacy which had been passed down to us. She called it an inheritance and transformation. Arendt admired Roman political thought and experience. In her eyes, the Roman Republic exemplified how human beings build and care for a political dwelling place through remembrance (HC 7-8).⁴⁷¹ If Athens was a politically decaying society, Rome was keen on rebuilding a pre-Socratic society (*res publica*) upon the ruins of the old one:⁴⁷²

For the polis was for the Greeks, as the *res publica* was for the Romans, first of all their guarantee against the futility of individual life, the space protected against this futility and reserved for the relative permanence, if not immortality, of morals. (HC, 56)

For Arendt, the functions of the Greek *polis* and the Roman *res publica* were the same: to fight against the futility of human affairs and individual mortality, and to guarantee and protect the relative transcendence of the world. Arendt's attitude toward Roman political experiences therefore differed from Heidegger's

Civilizations Review, 28-53.

⁴⁶⁹ See Heidegger, *Parmenides*. Heidegger wrote, "We moderns, or to speak more broadly, all post-Greek humanity ..." (p.103) and he repeatedly juxtaposed "Roman and modern", put the post-Greek and Roman period as the conjunction when he addressed modern people as "post-Greek humanity".

⁴⁷⁰ See Cassin, 1990. "Since the imperial age, the Greek word 'political' has meant something Roman. Nothing of the Greek remains but the bare sound." (67) and CASSIN, B. 2005. Time of Deliberation and Space of Power: Athens and Rome, The First Conflict. *Javnost - The Public*, 12, 39-44. "When the world is mute it is spatial and Roman. When the world talks, however, it is temporal and Athenian."

⁴⁷¹ The Romans are "perhaps the most political people we have known" and they "used the words 'to live' and 'to live among men' (*inter homines esse*) or 'to die' and 'cease to be among men' (*inter homines esse desinere*) as synonyms."

⁴⁷² Let alone the different economical-political backgrounds of their two different civilizations. Athenians and Romans celebrated the same things: the great deeds, the gloriousness which made them distinct from each other. The Roman *res publica* was the realization of the pre-philosophical Greek *polis*.

aloofness.⁴⁷³

If Arendt differed from Heidegger in admiring Roman political thought, however, it is important to recognize the characteristic intricacy and idiosyncrasy of her indebtedness to Heidegger regarding her interpretation of Roman political thought. In fact, her ‘turning away’ from Heidegger through her approval of Roman political thinking, was, to some extent, a ‘turning toward’ Heidegger since she remained true to his understanding of the political.

For Arendt, the beginning of Roman history was “centered about the idea of foundation” (OR, 199), and whereas the Greek political experience was the inception of western philosophy, the tradition of political thought indeed began with the founding of the Roman Republic. Without Rome, she insisted, Greek civilization “would never have become the foundation of a tradition” in the first place (PP, 54).

On a methodological level, Arendt followed Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenological way of understanding the human. She concentrated on restoring the concept as a concept, both in its original meaning and in the derivative phenomenon. She also analysed to destruction the traditional cognitive structure the two-world theory which outlived the original meaning of the concept in order to shed light on a new phenomenon and reveal new meaning of this concept by being faithful to the political existence of human being. Arendt did not meaninglessly impose anything upon the concept but worked towards phenomenological restoration and hermeneutic innovation. In the next section, I shall examine how her diagnosis of the modern crisis of authority in the light of the Greek format of authority is itself a dilemma among her readers.

⁴⁷³ So the question regarding which polity served in Arendt’s political thought with the status of a paradigm – Athenian *polis* or Roman *res publica* – does not matter anymore.

7.2 The modern crisis of authority

The modern crisis of authority illustrates an existential anxiety that we are disoriented without a tradition to guide us. Arendt attempted to revive the concept of authority because we are not in a position to know what authority really is, neither practically nor theoretically, because of two senses of loss: the loss of original meaning and of the authentic, undisputable political experience, of authority.

In particular, the Christian world and its institutional representative on earth has lost its divine legitimacy over the human world. In contrast, in Arendt's account of the American Revolution, the unique event of the founding of Rome provided the exemplar and source of authority. Arendt spared no effort to celebrate the "central, decisive, unrepeatable" act of the founding of a new body politic in human history, calling it "a unique event" (WA, 121). This foundation exemplified what seems to have been alien to the Greeks: the potential immortality, in other words the transcendence, of a city, the sacredness of the private realm, knowing how to make promises and how to forgive enemies, and the importance of law in the "changing circumstances and unstable affairs of acting men" (PP, 47).

Arendt looked beyond the Greek language and the "varied political experiences of Greek history" because of the limited "knowledge of authority and the kind of rule it implies" (WA, 91). Indeed the Greek notion of authority influenced and misled the modern perception of authority. Plato and Aristotle influenced the modern understanding of authority by framing models of existing relationships, such as shepherd and sheep, master and slave. Those relationships between the ruling and the ruled, between command and obedience, imply hierarchy not equality. In this, Arendt recognized the old prejudice of the privileged philosopher toward the human world. To her eyes, the parable of the cave showed that the sources of authority are given "outside and beyond, transcend, stretch above the cave of human existence". The rationale of this statement is that Greek philosophy begins with the articulation

and conceptualization of the initial wonder (*thauma*) of a supreme transcendental being, which privileges the urge to see the shining brightness of beauty (truth) in order to shed some light into the darkness of human affairs (the cave) (WA, 109).

Here, transcendence is associated with a sovereign 'maker' who transcends the political world which he makes, unmakes or remakes. The Greek sense of authority is associated with a standing above the political world, whereas for the Romans, transcendence was associated with ancestors, in the stretch of time, into the past because the Roman notion of *auctoritas* meant augmenting. Thus transcendence was not understood in terms of a creator who works from outside his creation but of the transcendence of beginning/birth/nativity, in other words, it seems to appear out of nowhere.

In Arendt's view, however, the nihilistic movement of turning away from the transcendental aspect of human being was so powerful that with the downfall of traditional metaphysics, the super-sensible transcendental realm disappears as well (HC, 288). Obviously, Arendt did not regret the loss of a supreme transcendence, rather she cared about a hiatus between past and future which could result in the modern crisis of authority and uprootedness from tradition. In this conjuncture, a degree of transcendence seems to be needed in order to legitimize political founding acts, as well as to lend some meaning to human existence at all. For Arendtian readers such as Canovan, however, human beings' dependence on a transcendent authority is replaced by their own creation of laws and institutions. But when the issues are shifted to "the human freedom and responsibility", such thinking becomes both comforting and unnerving.⁴⁷⁴

In Arendt's view, the political experience of the Romans, who created the term *auctoritas*, reveals the authentic meaning of authority. The most

⁴⁷⁴ CANOVAN, M. 1994. *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press.

“elemental difference between Greece and Rome”, according to Arendt, was “their respective attitudes toward territory and law”. The Greek word for law, *nomos*, originally meant a pasture, a place for cattle to graze, but came to mean an allotted space limited by a hedge or wall, whilst the Roman *lex*, with its derivation from a Sanskrit word meaning a fastening (from which, for example, ‘ligature’ comes) had a wider political implication. Instead of metaphorizing the wall which separates people from each other, *lex* implies grouping them together, and “indicates a formal relationship between people” (HC, 63 fn. 62). The decisive act of the newly founded city was to establish its own laws: the foundation provided “political validity and legitimation” for “all later deeds and accomplishments” (HC, 195, n.21).

Arendt’s concept of authority has gained increasing attention in contemporary political theory.⁴⁷⁵ Many commentators draw a theoretical framework from Arendt’s account of authority regardless of their varied perspectives or fields.⁴⁷⁶ Authority has become an indispensable part of understanding Arendt as a political theorist.⁴⁷⁷ Even so, treatments of Arendt’s concept of authority have often focused on the sources of authority or have analytically questioned the legitimacy of those sources. But to problematize the sources or legitimacy of authority itself is a mode of metaphysical rationality. So between explicating the modern pathological crisis of authority and the attempt ever to ‘define’ the concept, there is an insoluble metaphysical dilemma.

⁴⁷⁵ In this chapter, I turn from Arendt’s political conceptualization of the Greek concepts *logos* and *polis* to the Roman concept *auctoritas*, which was alien to Greeks.

⁴⁷⁶ It became clear that Arendt was recognized as the leading authority on the concept of authority. See MAYER, R. C. Spring, 1992. Hannah Arendt, Leninism, & the Disappearance of Authority. *Polity*, 24, 399-416. FARENGA, V. 2014. Liberty, Equality, and Authority: A Political Discourse in Greek Participatory Communities. In: HAMMER, D. (ed.) *A Companion to Greek Democracy and the Roman Republic*. HAYDEN, P. 2014. *Hannah Arendt: Key Concepts*, Routledge. HUMPHREYS, S. 2006. Nomarchy: On the Rule of Law and Authority in Giorgio Agamben and Aristotle. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 19, 331-351.

⁴⁷⁷ See, HAYDEN, P. 2014. *Hannah Arendt: Key Concepts*, Routledge. HAMMER, D. 2015. Authoring within history: the legacy of Roman politics in Hannah Arendt. *Classical Receptions Journal*, 7, 129–139. KRISTEVA, J. 2001. *Hannah Arendt: Life is a Narrative*, trans. COLLINS, F., University of Toronto Press. pp.186-187. CANOVAN, M. 1994. *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press. pp.218-223. HAUGAARD, M. 2018. What is Authority? *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 18, 104-132.

Fundamentally, the modern crisis of authority is the result of the decline of the metaphysical transcendent and everything which derives from it, including God.⁴⁷⁸ According to Arendt, authority “presupposes metaphysics’ two-world theory”. Consequently, the demise of authority is “inseparable from the closure of metaphysical rationality as traced by Nietzsche and Heidegger”: “To the question ‘What was authority?’ then, the short answer is metaphysics”.⁴⁷⁹ Transcendence as divinity, in Arendt’s understanding, had a special meaning born from her early study of Saint Augustine. In most cases, transcendence represents a divine voice either from God or from reason, telling us what to do, what not to do, who to love and so on. Not that Arendt was intolerant of such a divine voice; the real impulse was her constantly suspicious attitude toward its exemplary validity which “depends entirely upon an authority that is above and beyond all merely human laws and rules”. (LKPP, 5)

Given this theoretical background, Arendt sowed the seed for thought by a single indefinable and indeterminable concept. Because of the collapse of the tradition and the closure of metaphysics, Arendt’s concept of authority was infused with her overall project of rethinking action and judgment. In this respect, Villa investigated Arendt’s paradoxical attitude toward authority regarding the bankruptcy of our foundations which could shatter the whole epistemological, judgmental and moral system. As Villa observed, for Arendt, the loss of authority, as a mark of the break in our tradition, was also liberating.⁴⁸⁰

The dilemma which Arendt was caught up in was a situation between a

⁴⁷⁸ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. p.159.

⁴⁷⁹ As Villa suggested in his examination of Arendt, Heidegger and the fate of the political. I too wish to put their relation under interrogation, only I suggest an alternative reading regarding their understanding of the human in a subtler way.

⁴⁸⁰ VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. pp.157-164. Arendt’s “political theory attempts nothing less than the rethinking of action and judgment in the light of the collapse of the tradition and the closure of metaphysics (the ‘death of God’).” The negative, destructive side of this project consists of demonstrating how our instrumental or technical interpretations of action, thought and judgment fall under the shadow of a “dead God”. Arendt’s positive tasks were the uprooting of action and judgment from the pattern imposed by metaphysical rationality and the rethinking of these activities in their autonomy and freedom; that is, without grounds (in the metaphysical sense) p.175.

destructive reading and a full-scale uprooting. This negative element meant that action and judgment, liberated from the “pattern imposed by metaphysical rationality”, lack substantial grounding due to the modern crisis of authority and loss of tradition. The positive side of the uprooting was that the corpse of the metaphysical tradition became a burden instead of a treasure for modern human beings. We are capable of thinking without safety-barriers, facing up to the “abyss-like ground” and the uprooting of action and judgment.⁴⁸¹ As such, Arendt did not mourn but celebrated the disappearance of traditional authority.⁴⁸²

Margaret Canovan similarly highlighted the comforting and unnerving fact of the abyss of freedom in the absence of a transcendent authority. Consequently, Canovan pointed out that Arendt highlighted how the founding events, the “momentous world-building activities”, had done well to avoid “the abyss of freedom”.⁴⁸³

Arendt had noticed the absurdity of human beings’ refusal to recognize their freedom by turning to some transcendent authority. To find a replacement seemed impossible, until Arendt declared the vanishing of authority in the modern world and its possible re-birth in the French and American revolutions, especially in the founding of America and the interpretive capacity of the Constitutional law referred to above.

Indeed, Arendt often discussed transcendence in the founding action which

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸² HONIG, B. 1991. Declarations of Independence: Arendt and Derrida on the Problem of Founding a Republic. *American Political Science Review*, 85, 97-113.

⁴⁸³ CANOVAN, M. 1994. *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press. Arendt’s project of investigating the traditional hidden nature of origins of the concept of authority furthered her “rethinking political thought to take account of human plurality.” p.222. The idea that human beings are not dependent on transcendent authority, that they can and must create their own laws and institutions, building a human world in the desert that lies between them, is comforting but at the same time unnerving because it emphasizes human freedom and responsibility. Like many other existentialist thinkers who have drawn attention to the ways in which human beings attempt to avoid recognizing their freedom, Arendt observed that even those most directly involved in these momentous world-building activities had done their best to avoid falling into ‘the abyss of freedom’ as they passed over it.

must “carry the binding force of transcendental imperative” (OR, 204). This interpretation of transcendence was mostly focused on the legitimization of human actions especially at revolutionary founding moments, in terms of how to represent such moments in the political narrative – to seek the legitimating ground as emanating from ‘beyond’. The originality of the Constitution proposed by the American founding fathers was to be worshiped as a moment of human action which was legitimized as a “transcendentalizing gesture” (OR, 204).⁴⁸⁴ The act of founding “came out of nowhere in either time or space” and had nothing to hold on to (OR, 206):

The need for an absolute manifested itself in many different ways, assumed different disguises, and found different solutions. Its function within the political sphere, however, was always the same: it was needed to break two vicious circles, the one apparently inherent to human law-making, and the other inherent in the *petitio principii* which attends every new beginning, that is, politically speaking, in the very task of foundation. (OR, 161)

Without a firm basis, for Arendt, this transcendence was the least reliable source. For this reason, the relatively successful achievement of the American Revolution was grounded upon the authority of the Constitution, whilst the failure of the French Revolution was because it appealed to the authority of some theological and ontological transcendence.⁴⁸⁵

According to Seyla Benhabib, Arendt’s American revolution avoided the paradoxes between authority regarding the legitimacy of the sources and the unarticulated ultimate source of authority of the Constitution, the will of the people. Consequently, the problem seems to have been solved.⁴⁸⁶ To avoid Arendt’s enigmatic metaphysical dilemma, efforts have been spent in

⁴⁸⁴ See also REILLY, J. 2015. Chronology, Narrative, and Founding Acts: Between a Transcendental Rock and a Decisionist Hard Place. *Utopia and Political Theory*, 2.

⁴⁸⁵ HOYE, J. M. & NIENASS, B. 2014. Authority without Foundations: Arendt and the Paradox of Postwar German Memory Politics. *The Review of Politics*, 76, 415-437.

⁴⁸⁶ The American revolution “creatively interpreting and appropriating the royal and company charters that had originally legalized their establishment.” BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. pp.155-166.

reconstructing a modern version of authority.⁴⁸⁷ Yet these scholars have all sought to identify the sources or legitimacy of authority, be it unarticulated power from people, the sheer action of foundation or constitutional law. In fact, to pursue a legitimate partner alongside authority is a *modus operandi* using a metaphysical framework to interpret authority. Always circling around authority, never touching the core of the issue, humans are tempted to search for some transcendent authority. In fact, we find ourselves constantly caught up in circular argumentation. Ultimately, we have to admit that authority is not the answer to but the reason for the metaphysical dilemma.

In this regard, Steve Buckler maintained that Arendt did not prove “a *definitive*, and therefore *timeless* conceptual account” of particular concepts because this would potentially undermine the specific experiential significance of our political self-understanding today. Instead, her point was “to gain illumination from the contemporary period rather than re-presenting these experiences as cases that can be *deployed for purposes of explanatory or conceptual closure*”.⁴⁸⁸ Arendt engaged in uncovering the sources of strength and the meaning of authority because the very concept had “become clouded by controversy and confusion” (WA, 91-93). However, because of Arendt’s anti-metaphysical endeavours and the metaphysical nature of authority, the term turns out to be even more confusing. To avoid falling into the dilemma, I want to understand how Arendt thematized the political experience of transcendence through her revival of the Roman concept of *auctoritas*. As I shall explain, Arendt turned to the Roman political experience of *auctoritas* as augmenting to

⁴⁸⁷ For example, Humphreys began with Arendt’s model of interpretation and anxiety of authority, then suggested a legal way, the rule of law as a political principle, to respond to the contemporary increasing anxiety about authority. Likewise, by referring to Arendt, Weber and Raz, apart from some attention to the meaning of authority, and Haugaard primarily paid attention to analysing and theorizing the phenomenon of authority from sociological and normative perspectives which saw authority as a capacity for action which is power-to and power-over.

⁴⁸⁸ BUCKLER, S. 2011. *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory: Challenging the Tradition*, 22 George Square, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press Ltd. The approach which Arendt took to studying two revolutions was historical and comparative, as she sought to extract from those rare revolutionary events “a sense of the authentic enactment of freedom, where the coincidence of freedom and the ideal of new beginnings is evident.” p.105.

locate the depth of human existence.

Politically, the whole meaning of the past is to provide binding standards, models, examples, precedents or origins. And a tradition is a normative self-perception of a society's relationship with time, that is, with the past as well as how the past was set high above as sources of authority for the guidance of present actions and institutions. The relationship between city and the human, or the city and time, which characterized the Roman *auctoritas* has been selectively ignored. It is this relationality which determines the hierarchical model of authority from ancient Greece to the modern world. It is not only a relation between men on a smaller but complicated scale, but also on a larger scale between humans and the city, as a living organism, between the shorter life span of human beings and the seeming permanence of the city. Arendt said that "To be engaged in politics meant first and foremost to preserve the founding of the city of Rome" (WA, 120).

7.3 Auctoritas: the depth of human existence

In this section, I shall reconstruct Arendt's hermeneutic phenomenological account of *auctoritas* without appealing to the structural fallacy innate in traditional theology and ontology. I shall argue that the loss of authority is also a loss of the depth of human existence (BPF, 93).⁴⁸⁹ This way of reading differs from that of Villa's interpretation, which was placed on the time axis horizontally. My understanding of Arendt's account of *auctoritas* as augmenting is the vertical depth – constituted by 'the past' – of human existence, where the transcendence is anchored. I look to the human capacity of founding and remembering to exemplify how time was truly understood in Roman political

⁴⁸⁹ "the undeniable loss of tradition in the world does not at all entail a loss of the past, for tradition and past are not the same, as the believers in tradition on one side and the believers in progress on the other would have us believe." Although Arendt differentiated between the past and the tradition, she used them interchangeably anyway: this chapter regards the past as a collective memory and the human tradition as the depth of human existence.

thinking.

The Roman concept of *auctoritas* translates the original Greek experience of the *polis* in regard to the relationship between humans and the city, which is not necessarily hierarchical, but because of the metaphysical structural fallacy and the philosophical prejudice toward the darkness of human affairs, the modern perception of authority is. In view of *auctoritas*, the relationship between humans and the city is purely instinctive in terms of the Roman people's faith in the judgment of the Senate, as well as their piousness toward the past and their ancestors.

The genesis of the term and concept *auctoritas* could be traced back to the transformation of the Greek *polis* to the Roman foundation of a new city; especially after the long journey which the founders of Rome had endured, such as their forced departure from home, their wanderings in search of a new land, their conquest when they found it, their colonization of it and then their founding a city on it. The temporal significance of this historical juncture, namely, the founding and preserving of the city of Rome, as shown by Arendt, was deeply etched on the Roman divinities of Janus, the god of beginnings and endings, and Minerva, the goddess of remembrance (amongst other portfolios) (WA, 120-121).

This un-Greek experience of the sanctity of house and hearth (*lares et penates*) form the deeply political content of Roman religion, which Arendt pointed out literally meant *religare* 'to be tied back', 'obligated', to the enormous, almost superhuman and hence always legendary effort to lay the foundations, to build the cornerstone, *to found for eternity* (121). 'To found for eternity' was the very motif of the founding of Rome in the first place and a motif which, by erecting a human world, exemplified the most successful political action in human history. It is in this context that the word and concept of *auctoritas* originally appeared as part of the Roman trinity of religion, authority and tradition.

The presence of the trinity of religion, authority and tradition for Arendt was

most strongly felt in the absence of 'authority'. For Arendt, authority was to be understood literally because through "binding and promising, combining and covenanting", the power is kept in existence in order to "build a stable world structure to house ... their [men's] combined power of action" (OR, 175). The binding power of the foundation itself was religious because religion was the power which secured the foundation by providing a permanent dwelling place on the earth for the gods among men. (PP, 49)⁴⁹⁰ The Roman religion respected "whatever had been handed down from ancestors, the *maiores*, or greater ones" (PP, 49).

The positive side of the loss of authority, however, viewed the loss of religion in relation to the position of the gods over secular affairs in order to "look upon the past" without prejudice from any tradition. The distinctiveness of Roman political thought has disappeared from western reading and hearing ever since "civilization has submitted to the authority of Greek thought" (BPF, 28-9; 204).

Religion, authority and tradition therefore "became inseparable from one another, expressing the sacred binding force of an authoritative beginning to which one remained bound through the strength of tradition" (PP, 50). The inseparability of religion, authority and tradition meant that the breakdown of any of the three "inevitably has carried with it the downfall of the other two" (PP, 51). The same inseparability gives us clues about the temporality of *auctoritas*, which was well articulated in Arendt's account of tradition:

Without the sanction of religious belief, neither authority nor tradition is secure. Without the support of traditional tools of understanding and judgment, both religion and authority are bound to falter. And it is an error of the authoritarian trend in political thought to believe that authority can survive the decline of institutional religion and the break in the continuity of

⁴⁹⁰ See Arendt's quotation from Cicero: "there exists nothing in which human virtue accedes closer to the holy ways [*numen*] of the gods than the foundation of a new or the preservation of an already established *civitas*" *De res Publica*, vii, 12.

tradition. (PP, 51)

The “continuity of tradition” is only present when we are confronted with its hiatus. Arendt defined tradition as a package of “various combinations as binding standards, models of conduct, exemplary acts, precedents and/or accounts of origins”. In other words, the combined conventions constituted what we conceptualize as ‘tradition’. This conceptualization broadly provides us with “a normative mode of knowledge” along with an understanding of “an image of society’s relationship to time” (WA, 138). Appealing to the knowledge of tradition is to “ascribe linkage to the past” and to turn to the “source of authority for institutions and actions in the present” (WA, 138). So long as the past can be transmitted as tradition, it immediately possesses authority, which “presents itself historically” and in turn “becomes tradition” (MDT, 193). The subtle dialectics between founding and augmenting are achievable only insofar as we have a clear sense of the temporality of authority and tradition. Now, we can renew the idea of ‘history’ as an augmenting and, more importantly, only when relating the temporality of authority to the conception of tradition can we have a better understanding of the subtle relationship between founding and augmenting.

Here, it is helpful to consider the idea of ‘founding’ in the *Origin of the Work of Art*. Heidegger understood founding “in a triple sense”: “founding as *bestowing*, founding as *grounding*, and founding as *beginning*” (OWA, 198-203), which are three kinds of preserving; as bestowing, founding is like “an overflow, a bestowal”, a gift from nowhere; as grounding, human beings are available as preservers of the bestowing, in the direction of an “historical group of human beings”: the *polis*. From now on, every decision is not any “arbitrary demand” (OWR, 200): founding is never some immediate misinterpretation of creation as a “sovereign subject’s performance of genius”, rather creation should be interpreted as a “drawing-up, like drawing water from a spring”. In that sense, with bestowing and grounding, human beings as preservers take a leap out (OWR, 201). Without the bestowing of the past, there would be no future. A beginning “always contains the undisclosed abundance” of the ‘awesome’, as well as the “familiar and ordinary”. Founding as beginning enters history. Here

history does not designate any recording of a sequence in time of heroic events to be remembered. Rather “History is the transporting of a people into its appointed task as entry into that people’s endowment”, according to Heidegger (OWR, 202).

This way of understanding history might shed new light onto the metaphorical dilemma over modern concern for the past. For instance, Kafka’s traveller caught up on a road of time between past and future is a typical image of modern man who faces such a dilemma (BPF, 7; EU, 158). Or later, in Derrida’s interpretation of *Hamlet* with ghosts coming from the past, jumping in front of the future and haunting the present.⁴⁹¹

Nevertheless, when illustrating this awkward situation, the concern for the past does not simply hinge on the metaphysical mentality of gain or loss regarding the irretrievable authentic meaning of authority and experiences, but more profoundly for Arendt, the concern for the past hinged upon the depth of human existence. Therefore the uprooting of man from tradition is now acquiring another dimension: the depth of human existence as memory:

We were in danger of forgetting, and such as oblivion – quite apart from the contents themselves that could be lost – would mean that, humanly speaking, we would deprive ourselves of one dimension, *the dimension of depth in human existence*. For memory and depth are the same, or rather, depth cannot be reached by man except through *remembrance*. (BPF, 94, italics by the current author)

The dimension of the depth in human existence is memory and is reachable only through remembrance. The depth is metaphorically, like the roots of trees, flowers and other plants literally: as long as they hold fast to the soil, only then can they grow up against the sun, the wind, the frost, the rain and the dew. It also like architecture: the deeper the foundation is laid, the

⁴⁹¹ DERRIDA, J. 1994. *Specters of Marx : the State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, Routledge.

higher the building can rise. Indeed, Arendt visualized the hierarchical order of Roman authority in the familiar image of the pyramid: “it is as though the peak of the pyramid did not reach into the height of a sky above (or, as in Christianity, beyond) the earth, but into the *depth* of an earthly past” (WA, 124, italics by the current author).

In this regard, Arendt marveled at the human power to found the history of a city. Indeed, what makes men human is the capacity to found and sustain a city for human inhabitants. In this regard, authority is not to be confused with violence or any kind of coercion, but action in unison. And *auctoritas* is the residence of human power. *Religare* used to be understood as a magnificent superhuman legendary effort of building an eternal city, but in a hermeneutic analysis, *religare* can also manifest the utmost human power to strive for a relative permanence as aforementioned – the indefinite extension of a temporal dimension out of *auctoritas*. That is to say, the transcendent superhuman legendary effort was and will always be human.

Tradition is the foundation which human beings hold on to because the past determines in advance what they can achieve. And the future, as the fate of human beings as a collective whole, determines how we understand the past. For the gap between past and future which we experience in thinking is not historical or phenomenal, but “coeval with the existence of man on earth” (BPF, 7). Like other things created by men through all sorts of activity, man inserts himself into time and breaks it into tenses. More precisely, Arendt said, “it is the future that sends man’s mind back into the past and ‘up to the remote antiquity’” (BPF, 276, n2).⁴⁹²

The problem is how to preserve the depth of human existence. How do we

⁴⁹² This is where Arendt quoted Tocqueville: “although the revolution that is taking place in the social condition, the laws, the opinions, and the feelings of men are still very far from being terminated, yet its results already admit of no comparison with anything that the world has ever before witnessed. I go back to my age to age up to the remote antiquity, but I find no parallel to what is occurring before my eyes, the mind of man wanders in obscurity.”

ever grasp that depth in human existence? Is human memory the real site of history?⁴⁹³ Absolutely, yes it is. The loss is not only a failure of memory, but also a loss of the living themselves. Here, the loss regarding the failure of memory reminds us of the existential question of nobodyness which Arendt asked: why is there anybody rather than nobody?

The loss, at any rate, perhaps inevitable in terms of political reality, was consummated by *oblivion*, by a *failure of memory*, which befell not only the heirs but, as it were, the *actors*, the *witnesses*, whose who for a fleeting moment had held the treasure in the palms of their hands, in short, *the living themselves*. (BPF, 276)

Indeed, for Arendt, the loss was “consummated by oblivion”, by “a failure of memory”, but ultimately it is the loss of human actors and witnesses, “the living themselves” who once “held the treasure in the palms of their hands” but “left us no testament” and told the heir “what will rightfully be his” and “wills past possessions for a future” (BPF, 6). Those living beings who select, name, hand down and preserve are themselves the treasure. By cutting off the inheritance, there will be ‘no continuity in time’, but only the “sempiternal change of the world and biological cycle of living creatures in it” (BPF, 6). Those humans who had lost their memories did not know the significance of the treasure even when they once had it. They did not even know how to name it, not to mention grant meaning to it (BPF, 6).⁴⁹⁴ Nevertheless, the meaningfulness of an historical event which is worth preserving in memory is the one which is beyond victory and defeat.

Obviously, memory was anchored in the depth of human existence, and the world-building capacity to make and keep a promise together constitute the temporal dimension which Arendt associated with *auctoritas*. In this respect,

⁴⁹³ Admittedly, I am not the only one who has asked and will ask such questions. Correspondingly, there are plenty of guesses and answers to respond to the significance of memory in Arendt’s political thought. See, BARASH, J. A. 2002. Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Remembrance. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 10, 171-182.

⁴⁹⁴ “Action that has a meaning for the living has value only for the dead, completion only in the minds that inherit and question it.”

the loss of human means a loss of witnesses to remember, to inherit, to found, to preserve and to augment the city. The city is a living being which comes from the past, carries with it the human origin and tradition, rushes toward the future, out of love for the world. The *polis* is the world. So the loss of authority is a loss of *auctores*, authors, designers, builders, elders, augmenters of the city. In this sense, the American revolutionaries and the interpreters of the Constitution can be understood as augmenters of the law.

To summarize, the loss of the depth of human existence is the loss of tradition as testament. Human beings have a past preserved in historical records. The greatest all-encompassing libraries in the world cover almost every sphere and every detail of human life and human history whatsoever. So why, for Arendt and her contemporaries, do modern human beings experience such a loss of the past as the depth of human existence? Does the loss of the depth necessarily mean that we are becoming an ever more superficial creature on the earth by virtue of forgetting? Not exactly. Insofar as we keep augmenting the world which we build together, we still retain the dimension of human depth through temporality: the ineffable experience of human and worldly time, as opposed to the ever-recurring natural and scientific notion of time. Next, I shall discuss the human capacity as carriers of time through further analysis of *auctoritas* as augmenting.

7.4 Augmenting: human beings as carriers of *auctoritas*

Having compared the Greek and Roman understandings of authority and evaluated the modern crisis of authority in wanting legitimate sources from above and outside, I now take a shift to focus on the Roman understanding of authority from within human existence. In this section, by contrasting different attitudes towards elderly people between the Roman and the modern worlds, I shall exemplify why and how the transcendence lies within human existence, namely, why and how *auctoritas* is the living themselves. I shall then

substantiate my argument that humans are transcendental beings insofar as they are the carriers of time through augmenting.

Insofar as it refers to the depth of human existence, *auctoritas* transforms the theological and ontological idea of transcendence – beyond or outside – into an issue of the temporal dimension within human existence. Jaspers similarly took a phenomenological view of transcendence as “I experience my own existence as possessing a depth and a possibility that surpasses me”.⁴⁹⁵ To be human means to world upon the planet earth. As the carrier of time, human existence is capable of augmenting the world which we build and care for. *Auctoritas* manifests the Roman perception of how time flows through human beings; in the Roman case, the view of the old age.

In the Roman-Christian civilization, reverence for the past was an essential part of the Roman frame of mind. The “essence of the Roman attitude” has a two-fold meaning. First, to “consider the past *qua* past as a model, ancestors, in every instance, as guiding examples for their descendants”, and second, “to believe that all greatness lies in what has been, and therefore that the most fitting human age is old age, the man grown old, who, because he is already almost an ancestor, may serve as a model for the living” (CE, 190).

This attitude, however, stands in contradiction to the twenty-first century world as well as to the Greek attitude to life. For Plato and Aristotle, old age was a phenomenon considered as representing disappearing from the world. Aristotle dealt only with the visible: “as old age is to life, so is evening to day” (LM, I:113) Similarly, when Goethe commented on the phenomenon of growing old as “the gradual withdrawal from the world of appearances”, he reflected the spirit of the Greeks, for whom being and appearing coincide. In respect to the world of appearances, man is in the process of disappearing.

⁴⁹⁵ MORAN, D. 2014. What Does Heidegger Mean by the Transcendence of Dasein? *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 22, 491–514.

In contrast, for the Romans, man reached his “most characteristic form of being” precisely by “growing old and slowly disappearing from the community of mortals” (CE, 190). In this way, Arendt showed how drawing from the Roman concept of *auctoritas* can reinvigorate the old respect for old age. In her view, the loss of authority and responsibility for the world is a symptom of the modern estrangement from the world, especially within the conditions of a mass society (although it must be remembered that she was writing more than half a century ago) (CE, 188). The most dangerous thing is the collective unconsciousness which drives individuals in a political movement which is becoming out of control, and even the ones who start the movement keep silent as bystanders and claim no authority whatsoever and no responsibility for the damage which they have caused. “If we remove authority from political life”, Arendt worried, it might mean that the claims of the world could be denounced, the responsibility for the world could be rejected and the order in the world could be “consciously or unconsciously repudiated”. Worse still, people are happier to be giving orders than obeying them (CE, 186-187).

For Heidegger, human existence itself was a temporally structured event⁴⁹⁶ and his fundamental ontology regarded temporality as the ground of human being.⁴⁹⁷ Only a human being, with finitude but an infinite stretch of space and time, is capable of tending and caring for the world insofar as he remains capable of worlding. After all, time is the horizon of (human) being (BT, 398). In political settings, time is not an abstract concept, but a phenomenological horizon and the existential grounding for human being. Life is an actualization of the verb ‘to live’, to complete a journey from a beginning to an end.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁶ AHO, K. 2018. Temporal Experience in Anxiety: Embodiment, Selfhood, and the Collapse of Meaning. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*.

⁴⁹⁷ Such as the human condition of labour, work and action, or being *logos* and *polis*. For the standpoint of this chapter and the references to how Arendt was indebted to Heidegger’s ontology, see Chapter 2; also see, Benhabib’s ‘The Dialogue with Martin Heidegger: Arendt’s Ontology of *The Human Condition*’ BENHABIB, S. 1996. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Sage Publications. pp.102-122. VILLA, D. 1995. *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*, Princeton University Press. pp.113-143. RICOEUR, P. 1983. Action, Story and History: On Re-reading *The Human Condition*. *Salmagundi*, 60-72.

⁴⁹⁸ KLUN, B. 2018. Horizon, Transcendence, and Correlation: Some Phenomenological Considerations. *Journal for Cultural & Religious Theory*, 17, 354-366..

Authority can be restored “if it is recognized as immanent in the being of being human”, as Benjamin suggested.⁴⁹⁹

In this regard, I believe that time which is attached to human existence is what motivated Arendt’s “tireless, unsettling, and lively conversation” with the past and her attachment to the idea of authority, as Julia Kristeva remarked.⁵⁰⁰ Thus the iconic standpoint between past and future is Arendt’s foothold on her political thinking. She noticed that between “the decline of the old” and “the birth of the new” is “not necessarily an affair of continuity” but can be an “empty space”, “a kind of historical no-man’s land”. This historical no-man’s land corresponds to and interprets Heidegger’s retrieval of the Greek *polis* as an historical site around which human beings begin to flourish. An historical no-man’s land as much as a *polis* without human beings is inconceivable. Given this, we can associate the concern for the no-man’s land with the question of nobodyness: why is there anybody at all rather than nobody?

The augmentation of authority is therefore the augmentation of time through and within human beings. In time, human beings accumulate and augment *auctoritas* by collecting from the past the greatness and failures of human history and tradition. This is the temporal dimension of authority through augmentation of the past, so to speak. Given this interpretation, Arendt distanced herself from a conservative tendency in politics which “accepts the world as it is, striving only to preserve the status quo”, because the world is “irrevocably delivered up to the ruin of time unless human beings are determined to intervene, to alter, to create what is new”. To intervene, to alter and to create something new was a basic human capacity for Arendt. Indeed, we are always renewing our world by “educating for a world that is or is becoming out of joint ... in which the world is created by mortal hands to serve

⁴⁹⁹ BENJAMIN, A. 2016. The Problem of Authority in Arendt and Aristotle. *Philosophy Today*, 60, 253-276.

⁵⁰⁰ KRISTEVA, J. 2001. *Hannah Arendt: Life is a Narrative*, trans. COLLINS, F., University of Toronto Press. “Far from underplaying the ‘augmentation’ necessary for any initiative or radical reform, Arendt suggests that we should respect that authority, even as we destroy it, in particular, by scorn and laughter – which are other well-known weapons in Arendt’s arsenal.” p.187

mortals for a limited time as home”. Because the world is constituted by human beings who are doomed to die, it wears out. With continuous changes, therefore, the world is as mortal as human beings. So, to “preserve the world against the mortality of its creators and inhabitants it must be constantly set right anew”, which is how it works in terms of human intervention, alteration and the creation of human capacity of worlding. (CE, 189)

In particular, the most conspicuous way in which time operated within *auctoritas* was how time resided and functioned in the elders and thus, transformed the elders or the humans in the city. After all, as previously discussed, *auctoritas* was the residence of power or binding force. What I suggest in the following section is that *auctoritas* is the capacity to contain time. The temporality of *auctoritas* is the ability to consume, digest, transform and witness time or human life as mortals in the immortal city. In short, *auctoritas* is a container of time, the auto-constitution of time: man is not just temporal; he *is* time. The past begins with the disappearance of the future and the future is yet to come; in the German *Zukunft* from *zukommen* and the French *avenir* from a *venir*. For Heidegger, being and time were the same, being is the being of human being or Dasein. Thus, *auctoritas* is also the container of being and the human.

Let me rephrase the question: how did time operate with the concept and exercise of *auctoritas* in Rome? *Auctoritas* was the container of time because it was intertwined with religion and “to be religious meant to be tied to the past” (WA, 121, n.27-28).⁵⁰¹ The Roman sense of religion was connected closely with tradition, a word derived from the Latin *traditio* meaning ‘something handed down’ or the transfer of a possession from the past to the present (PP, 50-51).⁵⁰²

⁵⁰¹ The word and concept of *auctoritas* was contextualized in the myth of founding of Rome. According to Arendt, the derivation of *religio* from *religare* appears in Cicero. It was here that she confessed that she only cared about the “political self-interpretation of the Romans,” regardless of the etymological correctness. (Surely this weakens her interpretation of everything – she did not want to be bothered with accuracy in case it interfered with her argument – why spoil a good story with the truth?)

⁵⁰² Equivalently, the foundation stone became “the given testimony of the *autores* from which it derives

Most significantly, the Romans obtained their authority from the past: from their ancestors, from the Greeks and the 'elders' (*Senatus*, the *patres* literally a gathering of old men) (WA, 122). For Romans, the elders in the Senate were those who were endowed with *auctoritas* or "institutionalized in the senate",⁵⁰³ as if they were accumulators, containers, digesters or transformers of time. The elders had obtained authority "by descent and by transmission from those who laid the foundations for all things to come, the ancestors, whom the Romans therefore called the *maiores*" (WA, 122). Thus, the authority was upon the founders who were no longer among the living and the "authority of the living was always derivative". For the Romans, then, the elders, who wielded authority on behalf of everyone, were those who were closer to the ancestors and the past:

This is also why old age, as distinguished from mere adulthood, was felt by the Romans to contain the very climax of human life; not so much because of accumulated wisdom and experience as because the old man had grown closer to the ancestors and the past. Contrary to our concept of growth, where one grows into the future, the Romans felt that growth was directed toward the past. (WA 123)

Arendt turned to Cicero's essay *De Senectute* to investigate whether his treatise might give her a picture of the harmony of man's mental faculty in old age. The old are diminished by the future. In a way, they are futureless human beings but they carry life stories of their own past to contribute to the present and build a meaningful context for the future. In Cicero's treatise, Cato the Elder tells his friends that "great deeds are not done by strength or speed or physique; they are the products of thought and character and judgment. And far from diminishing, such qualities actually increase with old age".⁵⁰⁴

its own authority as long as it hands down (*tradere*) as tradition from generation to generation."

⁵⁰³ By returning to Cicero and Sallust, Dean Hammer explored the implication of the legacy of Roman politics in Arendt. "The authority of the senate resides in augmentation, in the prestige associated with continuing the spirit of authorship", Hammer suggested. HAMMER, D. 2015. Authoring within history: the legacy of Roman politics in Hannah Arendt. *Classical Receptions Journal*, 7, 129–139.

⁵⁰⁴ YOUNG-BRUEHL, E. & ARENDT, H. 2004. *For Love of the World*, Yale University Press New Haven 284

The elders of the Roman Republic were human beings who had witnessed the passing of time, who passed with time, who accumulated wisdom and experience over time, and who contained time. Conversely, time is temporarily 'saved' in old age. It is time that 'consumes' human beings, and 'transforms' them into a city, which in turn, provides human beings with a permanent home on earth. Time constitutes human beings, and human beings augment the city, and the city becomes a permanent world to house the humans. In a word, then, the authority of the elders "had its root in the past" upon which a future can therefore be promised (WA, 122).

So anything which happened in the past and was buried in the depth of human existence was transformed into an example, guiding the new generations as "authoritative models for actual behavior" or "the moral political standard" (WA, 123). It was in this primarily political context that the past was sanctified through tradition, according to Arendt:

Tradition preserved *the past* by handing down from one generation to the next the testimony of the ancestors, who first had witnessed and created the sacred founding and then augmented it by their *authority* throughout the centuries. (WA 124)

It was inconceivable to act without authority and tradition, "without accepted, time-honored standards and models, without the help of the wisdom of the founding fathers" (WA, 124). The future-oriented old aging in the phenomenal world is worth mentioning here:

Old age consists in the shrinkage of the future dimensions, and man's death signifies less his disappearance from the world of appearances than his final loss of future. This loss, however, coincides with the ultimate accomplishment of individual's life, which at its end, having escaped the incessant change of time and the uncertainty of its own future, opens itself to the 'tranquility of the past' and thereby to inspection, reflection, and

London. pp.457-8. See also Young-Bruehl's discussion of Arendt's meditation on old age in her last days by citing Cicero's *De senectute*, (p.474).

the backward glance of the thinking ego in its search for meaning. (LM, II:41-42)

The Roman respect for old age is exactly the inheritance from Aristotle's idea of practical wisdom in the *Politics*. Such wisdom requires no talent and is not acquired by education, but is a process of life experiences and nurture in practice. In short, the time which human beings augment together determines how far they can travel and how much suffering they can endure to create a city on the earth, and therefore, to be human. It should be noted that the metaphor of the city as a living organism goes further if we bring the characteristic of an actual human being into the picture: the city, like children who are exposed to errors and mistakes, also needed augmentation and confirmation through the council of the elders. And the council of the elders only gave augmentation between mere advice and a command (WA, 123).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reconstructed Arendt's hermeneutic study of the foundation of a new body politic to reveal how she captured this unique event as a "central, decisive, unrepeatable" *topos* or historical site in human history. It was in the Roman context that the city was regarded as a living organism through its foundation and augmentation. The city of Rome was like a new-born baby, born with an inheritance from the past, and the past was saved and expanded as the binding force of *auctoritas*, in the elders and in the Senate of elders.

In repudiating the metaphysical – absolute and eternal – legitimacy of sources of authority, Arendt made a shift from the Roman trinity of religion, authority and tradition to the law – the relative and indefinite.⁵⁰⁵ Like the Greek

⁵⁰⁵ Law originated from the Latin *lex* and Greek *nomos*, both with the spatial sense of hedges or boundaries. See Arendt, *On Revolution*, pp.156-157, 159. Also, BIRMINGHAM, P. 2006. *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights: The Predicament of Common Responsibility*, Indiana University Press. p.56.

polis, the Roman concept of *auctoritas* plays a crucial role in footnoting and explicating Arendt's idiosyncratic indebtedness to Heidegger. For Heidegger, one of the common grounds between the *polis* and *being* was that without humans, both the *polis* and *being* are meaningless and hollow. A city without human beings is mute, dead or nothing; without witness, questioner, or bard to leave some traces as evidence of its existence, in other words, to *be* at all, human existence is nothing, too. This could be the motivation of Arendt's question about nobodyness. I have therefore described human beings as meta beings insofar as human beings are capable of transcending and worlding by way of augmenting the city into our home.

The trinity of tradition, authority and religion is, in one word, the past; it is the depth of human existence – time. Time is buried inside human existence. The clock of biological time seems to stop ticking when we die and time seems to leave the dead for good. However, the sustainability of humankind is as mysteriously ineffable as the flow of time, never ceasing itself as long as there is 'somebody', the living themselves, through human existence. To construe a horizon of time as the hermeneutic horizon only gives us a plausible perspective regarding phenomenological temporality. The problem is that the dignity of human existence is not threatened by the ruthlessness of time but is achieved by augmenting or carrying the burden of time. Thus in the light of the Roman experience and thinking about how time 'flows' within human beings, we can have a new perspective regarding the question: why is there anybody rather than nobody?

Conclusion: the Core of Transcendence is Human Existence

In an attempt to philosophize Arendt's political thinking, I have sought to bring to the surface the transcendental dimension of the human in her writing, and in doing so, I have argued that to be human is a political imperative which is anchored within meaningful yet conditioned human existence as an immanent capacity to world. My thesis has therefore been guided by the human capacity to world: transcending as worlding (naming, building and caring). Being human is worlding: speaking, loving, remembering and augmenting.

By laying the ground for Arendt's phenomenological conception of the human onto transcendence as a relative durability and permanence, I have discovered the significance of the ineffability as a description of specific marginal human experiences which evade our linguistic and cognitive comprehension. By showing the ineffable dimension not as a categorical descriptor but as the constitutive fundament of our being, I have related this ineffability of being to the human capacity to name, build and care for a world; that is, I understand that being is the same as transcending as worlding. Being aware of this impenetrability of our nature or the whoness of the human, I was drawn by the accessibility of understanding as our cognitive capacity, which is not about the metaphysical bridge within framework of the Cartesian epistemology of "I think therefore I am", but rooted within Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology. Therefore, I designate moments of borderline experiences in our daily life when we can find no equivalent words or languages by which to describe as 'ineffableness'. Ineffableness as the transcendental dimension of human beings falls within the metaphor which Heidegger depicted: when we see nothing through the darkness of the night but are pretty sure there is something out there (6.1); and that the nothingness of the darkness intrusively blocks our vision but we can still listen to the calling of the being. Similarly, the question of nobodyness, "Why is there anybody rather than

nobody?”, looks like Arendt’s echoing of her listening to the teaching of Heidegger.

We keep coming back to this question throughout the thesis. When reflecting on the plight of stateless people, Arendt observed that “the world found nothing sacred in the *abstract nakedness* of being human” (OT, 299-302).⁵⁰⁶ In fact, for Arendt, the reduction of a person to a specimen of the human species entailed a fundamental loss. A person is identifiable and specifiable with a profession, with a citizenship, with an opinion and with a deed. In other words: somebody. Deprived of those “qualities and specific relationships” through which they distinguish themselves, a person becomes a human being in general: because they could be anybody they are essentially reduced to a nobody. In this way, Arendt identified human being with politics by situating every individual within an already existing world, a web of human relationships.

We have seen how Arendt understood the modern plight of human beings more generally in terms of the experience of worldlessness. Being worldless, we are dealing with the modern loss of the world as a fading horizon and numbing senses in a labouring and consuming society. The pervasive uprooting of humans in modernity is two-fold. Spatially, we lose the sense of a home in an earthly world. We are no longer *of* the world, not in the religious sense but in an existential sense. Temporally, we are no longer rooted in a tradition and in danger of losing our past.

In any case, beneath the uprooting is the massive non-stop unthinking movement of modern technology. In Arendt’s view, stateless people are the most symptomatic group in modern politics precisely because of the dehumanization which they have suffered both in losing the relevance of speech and in being deprived from participating in a space of appearances. In

⁵⁰⁶ Indeed, Arendt’s concept of human rights is clothed with these ‘*with*’ characteristics, these institutionalized devices, “based upon the assumed existence of a human being as such.”

Chapter 4, we saw the loss of lovers through the metaphor of the desert in modern condition. In Chapter 5, we could see that we are moving into “a world where speech has lost its power” to world (HC, 3-4). In Chapter 6, we saw how the uprooting of humans in modernity blocks their access to questioning the two-fold ‘nowhere’ of human existence: where we are from and where we are heading. In Chapter 7, we tried in vain to trace the modern crisis of authority from traditional metaphysics.

We also saw, therefore, that for Arendt, to humanize the world did not mean to work and labour on the surface of the earth to occupy, colonize, reify or transfer it into a human world. On the contrary, the world is characteristically human just because the human is a worldly being. The fundamental principle of Heidegger’s philosophy was to be human, to be *Dasein*, to be-there. Thus, to humanize the world, in a sense, means to preserve the humanness of the world and the worldliness of the human, particularly in a world which has become worldless, in-human and unreal. In Chapter 4, we recognized the significance of loving not as a romantic feeling, but as a power to care for the world. In Chapter 5, we understood speaking as a naming force that could build a bridge between the sensible and supersensible realms. In Chapter 6, we witnessed how the *polis* is the site of human existence and that human existence is the carrier of *polis*. In Chapter 7, we recognized that Roman political thinking could provide a plausible answer by seeking legitimate sources of authority from within human existence.

Most importantly, we have discussed why and how human existence – to be alive – is the core of transcendence. Specifically, to be alive was a phenomenon for Arendt which meant “to live in a world that preceded one’s own arrival and will survive one’s own departure” (LM, 20). In view of this, Arendt agreed with Heidegger: what transcends is *Dasein* itself – the being of human being. Also, for Arendt, “the core of the so-called transcendence” lies in the fact that “I can imagine something that does not appear and can never be made to appear” (DTB, 660). Hardly noticed and rarely discussed, the problem of the modern perception of human is that by forsaking the ‘meta’ we are left only with

the 'physical' dimension of being. Without acknowledging the supersensory existence, we are losing the existential ground which provides us with a real sense of being alive in a dehumanized world.

In view of this, I distill the term *meta* as a shorthand to retain the implication of 'handing over' – the accessibility. Metaphysics enables us to do some *meta* work, such as calculating, mapping, navigating, legislating, even conquering the world into a habitable place. Metaphysics also retains the original philosophical wonder at the ineffable experiences and immeasurable greatness of action.

Although the movement of nihilism annihilated the meta, leaving us with the mere physical dimension of being, we are not here to dwell in the past, nor to seek a compromising middle ground. Instead, I think, we need to shift focus, to look at human existence through a horizon which confronts and confirms our existence in the sense that we create and dwell in a world which lifts us above the planet earth and promises a future.

Again, through my Arendtian and Heideggerian lens, my use of transcendence is in no way meant to simply refer to ontological absoluteness or theological divinity. Although I have used the word 'transcendental' throughout the thesis, I recognize that there are multiple ways of interpreting transcendence and transcending in Arendtian political theory. This descriptor was selected as it designates human existence as transcending (as carrier or passage) toward the invisible unknown, which used to be derived from and belonged to the metaphysically mysterious realm. What I have focused on is the human capacity to transcend (carry over) the ineffableness in Arendt's political writing.

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