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Love's shared world: Reorienting Heidegger's phenomenology of love

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Accepted Version

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Heidegger's brief remarks on the theme of love enable us to reconstruct a view of it as a powerful feeling that both requires and amplifies a truthful recognition of oneself. The emphasis this places on the significance of love for the self and of the self for love, along with the kairological temporality Heidegger associates with love, means the account ends up "both sacralising and marginalising the other". (Tömmel 2019, 242) I will suggest that this problem arises because Heidegger's account elevates love's disruptive possibilities at the expense of its capacity to generate a shared world of everyday experience, and that his account of world-time offers underutilised resources for addressing this issue. This, in turn, generates a picture that resonates in illuminating ways with both Yao's (2020) model of gracious attentive love, and De Jaegher's (2021) enactivist account of the relationship between loving and knowing.

Keywords: Heidegger; love; temporality

Introduction

I will begin with the customary set of disclaimers that prefaces most work on the topic of love within Heideggerian phenomenology, from Agamben's 1986 essay on the "passion of facticity" to recent work by Tatjana Noemi Tömmel and Ricky De Santis: Heidegger's thought is not usually associated with love, and has indeed often been criticised for failing to account for its significance; consider Jaspers' famous remark in *Notes on Martin Heidegger*, cited by almost every text on the theme at some point, that Heidegger's philosophy is "without love, and therefore also unlovable in style" (*ohne Liebe: Daher auch im Stil unliebenswert*).¹ At the same time, however, Heidegger's brief remarks, while scattered, do enable us to reconstruct a relatively consistent view of love as a powerful feeling that both requires and amplifies a truthful recognition of

¹ This remark is cited in, for example, Agamben, 'Passion for Facticity', 185 and Tömmel, *Wille und Passion*, 52.

oneself, thereby radically reshaping one's relation to others and to the world. I want to suggest here that this reconstructive undertaking is worthwhile – and that it has not yet been exhausted – because of a problem that Heidegger's account must grapple with: The emphasis it places on the significance of love for the self and of the self for love, along with the kairological temporality Heidegger associates with love, means he ends up “both sacralising and marginalising the other”.² This issue is, of course, not exclusive to Heideggerian phenomenology; the philosophy of love has long struggled with the problem of conceptualising love's complex dynamics without under-or over-emphasising, dissolving or hardening, the autonomy of the self. I want to suggest that the Heideggerian version of this dilemma is particularly interesting because it illustrates that the problem is exacerbated if love's disruptive possibilities are emphasised at the expense of its capacity to generate a shared world of everyday experience. I will argue, moreover, that Heidegger's work offers underutilised resources for addressing this issue. These can be found in what might be described as a different corner of the same territory within which his account of love locates its central dynamic: Temporality. Heidegger's remarks primarily associate love with the moment of vision (*Augenblick*); I want to suggest that we can gain much if we look beyond this to also consider love's effects upon world-time (*Weltzeit*). Such a change in emphasis is, moreover, particularly useful because it generates a picture that resonates in illuminating ways with innovative recent contributions to the philosophy of love - Vida Yao's model of gracious attentive love, and Hanne De Jaegher's enactivist account of the relationship between loving and knowing.³

² Tömmel, 'Love as Passion', 242.

³ Yao outlines this view in 'Grace and Alienation'; De Jaegher defends the relevant account in 'Loving and Knowing' and 'Love In-Between'.

Heidegger's (fragmentary) account of love

First, a brief sketch of some of the key themes of Heidegger's remarks on love. The most systematic treatment of the topic can be found in the lectures on Nietzsche. In an early section of the course, Heidegger sets out to disentangle three terms that he claims are too frequently run together, including by Nietzsche: Affect (*Affekt*), passion (*Leidenschaft*) and feeling (*Gefühl*).⁴ The distinction he draws here will be essential to understanding his views on love.

Heidegger argues that affects – such as anger and infatuation – arise and dissipate rapidly; they take us over, appearing almost like an external force, so that we are likely to both lose control over ourselves and, crucially, lose sight of who we are and what we are doing. In contrast to this, passions – such as hate and love – appear to be more deeply rooted within us because they both shape and articulate our way of Being-in-the-world. They develop over long periods of time and have lasting effects, unifying rather than undermining our sense of ourselves. Importantly, they allow us to see ourselves, others and the world more clearly; they are literally 'clear-sighted' (*hellsichtig*). Heidegger writes:

Love is never blind, but clear-sighted; only infatuation is blind, fleeting and susceptible, an affect not a passion. To this passion belongs a broad reaching out, an opening up [...] This reaching out within passion not only takes us beyond ourselves, it gathers our being to its proper ground – it first opens up this ground in this gathering – so that passion is that through which and in which we find secure footing within ourselves and clear-sightedly master that which is

⁴ This analysis can be found in Heidegger, *Nietzsche Erster Band* (GA6.1), 40-51.

around and within us.⁵

This passage highlights many of the primary motifs of Heidegger's discussions of love, both in his public and private works: Love's capacity to uncover and articulate who and what we are, especially to ourselves; its ability to clarify and unify our sense of ourselves; and, crucially, its visionary nature, which – to take up Tatjana Noemi Tömmel's compelling reading - Heidegger's private correspondence especially associates with the revelation of *kairos*, the *Augenblick* or moment of vision of the authentic present.⁶

In an exchange with Arendt, Heidegger describes this as the moment where “the other's presence suddenly breaks into our life”⁷. As Tömmel, in analysing this and similar statements in Heidegger's correspondence, writes, from such a perspective

...the breaking-in of love into one's life is not merely a particular and meaningful experience, but a radical break with the continuity of existence as it was before. [...] The 'moment of vision' designated by this 'break-in' is a new beginning that breaks with the linearity and homogeneity of time, like wonder.

Such a moment or *kairos* is a crisis, in which existence can be seized or missed.⁸

This messianic breakthrough shatters ordinariness, a true recognition of self and other that – as Tömmel argues – must not be alien to the events beyond it, but rather restructure them in terms of awaiting and promise, such that the absence of the beloved

⁵ Ibid., 45. (My translation.)

⁶ Tömmel's reading can be found in *Wille und Passion* and 'Love as Passion'.

⁷ From his correspondence with Arendt, as quoted in Tömmel, 'Love as Passion', 235.

⁸ Ibid.

becomes even more important than their presence in a re-enactment of the *parousia*.⁹ In this radically disruptive moment, love reveals and heightens, rather than subdues, the lovers' sense of themselves and their resoluteness; indeed, 'true love', Heidegger notes in a speech at his brother's wedding, can only arise when we recognise and take up ourselves in this way:

True love is not grounded in external characteristics, relations or circumstances. It is not that which can be mutually given upon agreement. It firstly and exclusively grows out of an inner truthfulness to oneself. Only where this has awakened is truthfulness towards the other possible. [...] This inner truthfulness includes within itself self-responsibility [...] To shape one's life in accordance with an inner truthfulness and free self-responsibility means to awaken and keep awake true love in oneself and thereby simultaneously in the other.¹⁰

If there is a 'true' love, we might wonder what the point of contrast would be. We have already seen that Heidegger distinguishes love from infatuation, but he also sets up an

⁹ I am drawing on Tömmel's analysis in *Wille und Passion*, 83-117ff.

¹⁰ Heidegger, 'Zum Hochzeitstag' (GA 16), 42-53. My translation. Tömmel also discusses this passage in *Wille und Passion*, 118-119. Of course, one may have misgivings about relying upon Heidegger's personal correspondence and private speeches for insight into his philosophy of love. The scarcity of Heidegger's published remarks on the topic somewhat unfortunately necessitates this practice. More importantly, however, Heidegger's private comments about the nature of love are consistent with his public ones in ways that, I think, justify looking to both. Heidegger's letters and the wedding speech were not intended to be philosophically rigorous statements, and should not be interpreted as such, but they do resonate with Heidegger's philosophical work on the topic, shedding light on the latter's implications for lived experience – for the very shared world of everyday co-existence that is crucial to my argument here.

opposition between it and what he often calls ‘*bürgerliche Liebe*’, bourgeois love.¹¹ The latter focuses on contractual arrangements, and cashes out commitment in terms of shared goods, plans and fortunes; it is a staid, comfortable transaction that occludes and excludes the radical crisis of the moment of vision. Generally, Heidegger insists that love both resists and transcends forms of calculative thinking. In *Wozu Dichter?*, he outlines that the “logic of the heart” not only runs counter to calculative and instrumental reason, but also inhabits and opens up a form of inwardness that must be differentiated from the cognitive interiority of the Cartesian subject.¹² If we allow ourselves to surrender to this logic, we may, he suggests, be able to recover the interconnectedness of love, death and pain that calculative reasoning covers over.

In order to function like this, love must not be conceptualised as a possessive or obsessive fascination with the specificities of the other. On the one hand, Heidegger tells us in the *Letter on Humanism*, love is a ‘letting be’ that enables an unfolding into possibility itself; an authentic *Mitsein* that does not close off or take on the possibilities of the other, but recognises their unfurling.¹³ On the other hand, love cannot get lost in the particularities of the beloved because of its grander role, an enabling aspect of the transcendence that allows *Dasein* to have a world at all. Agamben locates this in what he calls the ‘paradox of facticity’, that is, love only appears to be absent in *Being and Time* because it turns out to characterise the very relation of Being-in-the-world and is thus integrated into the very foundation of that book’s project.¹⁴

¹¹ See Tömmel, ‘Love as Passion’, 241.

¹² Heidegger, ‘Wozu Dichter?’ (GA 5), 306 (my translation).

¹³ Heidegger, ‘Brief über den Humanismus’ (GA 9), 316. Agamben discusses this in ‘The Passion of Facticity’, 199-200.

¹⁴ See Agamben, ‘The Passion of Facticity’.

This dynamic – love’s ability to take us beyond ourselves, as is proclaimed in the Nietzsche lectures – plays a central role in more recent readings of Heidegger’s account of love. Iain Thomson argues that Heidegger’s relationship with Arendt eventually developed into what Thomson calls an “ontological understanding of love” which defines “love as fidelity to an ontological truth event”¹⁵ that, crucially, “is capable of granting us mortals access to a perspective outside of the ordinary passage of time”.¹⁶ Meanwhile, Ricky DeSantis compares this movement to Plato’s account of love, where the beauty of a specific beloved trains us to recognise aspects of the Form of Beauty itself.¹⁷ DeSantis draws our attention to this passage from Heidegger’s 1932 lecture on the *Phaedrus*:

It appears as if he were in love with another man. In reality what is at issue for him even in this love is his own being. Being is the $\epsilon\upsilon$ towards which all love and counter-love is directed. The sustaining, hidden ground of love and counter-love is being.¹⁸

¹⁵ Thomson, ‘Thinking in Love’, 477.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 473. Thomson argues that this understanding of love can resolve the tension between what he calls ‘perfectionist love’ (which is grounded in particular qualities of the beloved) and ‘unconditional love’ (which instead takes its origins to be unknowable). According to Thomson, ontological love is able to retain the mystery of unconditional love while maintaining the perfectionist’s recognition of the beloved’s specificity. While I agree that overcoming this dichotomy while retaining the best parts of each position is an important goal, I would suggest that an ‘ontological understanding of love’ still falls prey to the problem outlined here. That is, it overemphasises the extraordinary, disruptive and indeed mystical aspects of love, and hence benefits from being supplemented by the model of ordinary, world-building love that I try to defend in the next section of the paper.

¹⁷ See DeSantis, ‘Love’s Resistance’.

¹⁸ Quoted in *ibid.*, 8.

The movement here, as both DeSantis and Tömmel note, is reminiscent of Diotima's Ladder, outlined in the *Symposium*.¹⁹ There, love begins with recognition of the physical beauty of a specific beloved, before moving onwards and upwards as the lover learns to recognise these fragments of the true Beauty everywhere; we are to "begin with examples of beauty in this world, [...] using them as steps to ascend continually with that absolute beauty as one's aim".²⁰ Love, Heidegger seems to suggest, neither begins nor ends with a particular beloved; it both originates in and enables a clear-sighted self-apprehension, a recognition of ourselves and the other as creatures of possibility, and ultimately, the unconcealment of the 'proper ground' into which we are gathered.

Rehabilitating love's ordinariness: From *kairos* to *Weltzeit*

As Tömmel (2019) points out, the mere fact that Heidegger does have something like a phenomenology of love is not yet enough to address the criticism that his work fails to grapple properly with the complexity of affective sociality and social affect, for his model of love arguably still evinces the same characteristics that have long led readers to find the social dimension of *Being and Time* wanting.²¹ While Heidegger does emphasise that the lover must truly see and know the beloved, ultimately this is cashed out in terms that downplay the latter's particularity, and indeed the concrete relationality of interpersonal negotiation, communication and commitment. Love does disclose the beloved as other and must let them be, but it is important because of what this says

¹⁹ Tömmel makes this comparison in *Wille und Passion*, 77-78; De Santis in 'Love's Resistance', 7.

²⁰ Plato, *Symposium*, 94.

²¹ Tömmel, 'Love as Passion', 242.

about and does for oneself: Because it both requires and enables a unified, clear and resolute view of oneself and the world; because it illuminates the transcendence that enables Being-in-the-world; because it takes one out of the everyday; because it enables one to resist everything from calculative thinking to Cartesian solipsism to bourgeois groundlessness.

Both Tömmel and DeSantis emphasise the positive implications of the explicit and implicit references to Plato's account of love, but consider what Diotima's Ladder requires²²: To love truly and properly, we must not stay caught up in the specificity of another; we must use it in order to train ourselves to recognise and appreciate the traces of Beauty everywhere, from the particular to the general and the abstract. Heidegger insists that the 'logic of the heart' is radically different to instrumental and calculative thinking, yet there is something almost instrumental in all of this, in the idea that love both starts and ends with the state of the self.

This reaches its highpoint in the messianic temporality of love as *kairos*, where the presence of the beloved ultimately becomes less important than their absence.

Tömmel writes:

The specific temporality of love does not lie in a time lived *together*, but in the fact that the lover awaits the "returning unification" (Heidegger 2005, 99; [Tömmel's] translation) with the beloved. [...] The absence is not experienced as a deficit, as it makes it possible for the lover to believe in the other.²³

I want to suggest that what we see here is not just a focus upon the self at the expense of

²² See Tömmel, *Wille und Passion*, 77-78 and De Santis, 'Love's Resistance', 7.

²³ Tömmel, 'Love as Passion', 239.

the particularity of the other, but also – and relatedly – a neglect of the ordinariness of love, of the concrete reality of shared existence, the preciousness of the mundane necessities of intertwined lives. Heidegger, in his wedding speech and elsewhere, hints at two options for love: On the one hand, we have bourgeois love/*bürgerliche Liebe*, which is contractual, superficial, transactional, small; it looks at external characteristics, and emphasises shared acquisitions as the marker of commitment. If we cash this out in temporal terms, we might associate it with the ordinary concept of time, for Heidegger suggests that its relationship to time is merely quantitative and instrumental – so-called love measured in the number of moments piled up over time, alongside other possessions; the length of time spent together and the number of boxes ticked. On the other hand, we have kairological love, which disrupts the staid comforts of the everyday; a moment of vision that remains ever-deferred, reminiscent of the trope of star-crossed lovers who both yearn for each other while revelling in what it means to miss each other, better apart than together. I would argue, however, that this is a false dichotomy, and that, moreover, we can find another option – one that does not emphasise love's disruptiveness at the expense of its ability to ground a world of shared experience – within Heidegger's own account of temporality. That is, rather than choosing between love cashed out in terms of ordinary or kairological conceptions of time, I propose that we look to *Weltzeit*, world-time, to inform our understanding of the lived experience of love.

Recall that, for Heidegger, world-time is the temporality that we encounter in our everyday lives; it is the time with which we are concerned, that is, engaged with in the purposive navigations that constitute our ordinary dealings with the world.²⁴ It is the

²⁴ See Heidegger's account of world-time in *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2), 406-420ff.

temporality that we deal with when we assign spans of time to our tasks; when we consider whether it is the appropriate or inappropriate time for something; when we use phrases like ‘running out of time’ or ‘having no time’, inhabiting the day-to-day. Heidegger characterises it in terms of four features: Significance (*Bedeutsamkeit*), publicness (*Öffentlichkeit*), datability (*Datierbarkeit*), spannedness (*Gespanntheit*). Significance here highlights that world-time manifests the same structures of purposive significance that comprise worldhood, and is cashed out primarily in terms of there being a ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ time for something within the context of a task or attaining an end. World-time’s publicness means that it is part of, and encountered in, the shared space of socially-defined roles, tasks, means and ends, which includes notions of apt time-use and conventions about temporal concepts. ‘Datability’ means that we can speak of it in terms of moments to which we assign some concrete, meaningful determination; we track them, not in abstract terms, but through what we are doing and experiencing, the texture and weight of particular events signified by notions like ‘then, when...’ or ‘now, that...’.²⁵ Finally, world-time is spanned – it is not encountered as, nor composed by, a series of disconnected instantaneous moments; each ‘now that’, each ‘right time to’, has a particular stretch to it, an extension that varies with every task and context.²⁶ Time, we say in common parlance, slows down or speeds up with our varying levels of, say, attention to detail, boredom (in the non-technical sense) or eagerness; for Heidegger, the temporality of our world-time is spanned by the context of our business with it.

What would it mean for a Heideggerian phenomenology of love to be reoriented

²⁵ Ibid., 414.

²⁶ Ibid., 409.

from kairological temporality to world-time? It would involve retaining Heidegger's emphasis on the unifying and clarifying power of love as passion, and on the importance of letting both self and other be and unfurl in possibility, and even on the need for a clear-sighted responsibility towards oneself, while opening up a space for these processes to happen through the construction, navigation and negotiation of a shared world, a shared everydayness. It would mean reasserting the importance of the ordinary rhythms and habits of love, the mundane as well as the spectacular.²⁷ Consider Richard Mohr's famous definition of marriage as "intimacy given substance in the medium of everyday life, the day-to-day [...] the fused intersection of love's sanctity and necessity's demand".²⁸ If we cash out love in terms of a specific modification or mode of world-time, we might think of the collaborative generation of shared significances through the intertwining of concerns, capacities, and goals, where the determination of the right time or the wrong moment is filtered through the perspective of a structure that is both interpersonal and intimate. The lovers work together to construct and reshape a temporalized narrative that affects how moments are dated; time is spanned differently depending on whether it is encountered individually or together. Crucially, what it means for world-time to be public takes on further layers, as it were; the world-time of the shared world inhabited by lovers could be seen as both an intensification and constriction of time's sociality. On the one hand, time is not only shared at a radical level, but the local modification of world-time generated and

²⁷ I would like to emphasise this point. As I note again towards the end of the paper, I am not arguing that we should jettison the disruptive, kairological vision of love; rather, I think it needs to be supplemented by an account of everyday love, just as everyday love in turn must be capable of opening up a space for the extraordinary to break through. A comprehensive Heideggerian phenomenology of love must acknowledge both.

²⁸ Mohr, 'The Case for Gay Marriage', 226.

experienced by the lovers may well be one that calls for and seeks out public validation. Many philosophies of love highlight the desire that a shared identity be publicly recognized, acknowledged, celebrated, and the harms that follow when this is denied to the lovers. On the other hand, the world-time of the lovers may also seek to close itself off from the wider world, generating a private bubble within a public realm; think of lovers' in-jokes, anecdotes, the stories and hopes that are not shared, cannot quite be articulated, lose some of their meaning outside of the bounds of the relationship.

This also provides us with a richer understanding of what it means for love to be disrupted. It is all well and good to claim, as Heidegger does, that love benefits from – indeed, reaches its height in – the capacity to remember, await and believe in the absent beloved. However, if we think of separation as the disruption of the shared temporal rhythms of world-time, we get a sense of the concrete structures through which this absence manifests, of what it means to miss someone. Consider the weight of routines that were once shared a sense of the right and wrong time to do things that and now needs to be rebuilt; the empty place at the table, each room marked by an absence that is all the more intense because it is not merely spatial but bound up in recollection and anticipation; the small movements designed to make way for a body no longer there; time stretches and flows differently when it is no longer marked with another. We can also articulate in temporal terms the strategies that we use to rebuild our world: For example, in recounting the unique structures of significance and datability that were defined and sustained within a relationship - in retelling and marking the anecdotes and memories and little anniversaries, the textured stories that once made up *our* world - we might extend this lost pocket of *Weltzeit* to others who can help to keep it going.

Of course, all of this is not to say that love is not disruptive or a state of exception, that it cannot open up the moment of vision; just as our immersion in world-

time does not preclude us from experiencing the authentic present. However, I think we lose something important when we make this love's defining temporal register. And we are too easily tempted to see it in terms of the transcendent heroics of a resolute self, rather than the daily negotiation, struggle, compromise, routine and ritual of a shared life, one that can be all these things without lapsing into the transactional narrative of what Heidegger labels bourgeois love.

World-time in Yao's model of gracious love

Beyond helping us to conceptualise the shared world and daily life of love without reducing it to the transactional conventionality of bourgeois relations, this reorientation of Heidegger's account of love from kairological to world-time also allows us to draw a range of interesting connections with recent debates in the philosophy of love- ones that show why this whole strange endeavour of reconstructing what Heidegger wrote about love is worth doing (beyond any interest this might have to Heideggerian scholarship itself). That is, Heidegger's remarks generate the kind of challenges and gaps that are still of urgent relevance in contemporary philosophical work on love, meaning that each may have something to offer the other – providing not only greater clarity about the stakes and complications at issue, but also novel resources for articulating solutions. I will focus on two recent approaches that, I want to suggest, grapple with particularly similar problems to ones that Heidegger's account faces, meaning that each can shed light upon the other.

First, I want to turn to Vida Yao's analysis in her recent paper 'Grace and Alienation'. Here, Yao draws on Iris Murdoch's account of what the latter calls 'attentive' love, that is, one that involves "really *seeing* the other accurately and justly", without interference from social expectations or our own "fears, needs [and]

fantasies”.²⁹ This attentiveness recalls Heidegger’s own description of the clear vision of love; recall the remark in the Nietzsche lectures that “love is never blind; it is clear-sighted”.³⁰ Yao argues that Murdoch’s model generates an issue that, I would suggest, also affects Heidegger’s framework: That is, the possibility of alienating the target of this vision. Yao explores cases in which the beloved is keenly aware of their flaws and ‘shrinks from the gaze’ of the attentive other; the very attentiveness that the latter might then try to use to overcome this distance will only serve to increase it, generating guilt and shame.³¹ Attentiveness alone, Yao argues, is not enough to enable “connection, communion or intimacy”.³² Her solution is to add to Murdoch’s model a quality that Yao dubs ‘grace’, whereby the beloved is not only seen but accepted – not in a way that overlooks their flaws, or seeks to fix them, but rather acknowledged and appreciated as they are.³³ She gives the example from a novel (Marilynne Robinson’s *Home*) of a person returning to his estranged family; various family members respond to the news of the bad things he has done and been by ignoring or excusing them, or by making their love conditional on him exhibiting remorse or making amends in specific ways. Only his sister gets through to him because, unlike the others, she makes it clear that she really sees him, especially the parts of himself and his history that he is most ashamed about, and accepts him. In Yao’s words, “she likes his soul the way it is”.³⁴

²⁹ Yao, ‘Grace and Alienation’, 6.

³⁰ Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Erster Band* (GA 6.1), 48. (My translation.)

³¹ Yao, ‘Grace and Alienation’, 3-6.

³² *Ibid.*, 3.

³³ *Ibid.*, 9-15ff.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 10. It is worth noting that the example Yao analyses here is one of familial rather than romantic love. However, I take Yao to be suggesting that the underlying structures of attention and grace are applicable to various forms of love.

I think we can take a couple of important points from this. On the one hand, as I indicated earlier, I find it plausible that a beloved would shrink from the perspective represented by a moment of vision, the kind of clear-sightedness that Heidegger emphasises, as they would from a Murdochian attentiveness. Both accounts need a story of what one does with what one sees, how one responds to it; if we're talking about love, recognition is only the first step. Heidegger does, of course, also emphasise the importance of letting the other be as they are, but this is still lacking without the crucial element that Yao proposes – a committal seeing, a letting be that also embraces. That is, Yao's account highlights not only what it is that a purely kairological model of love is missing, but also the deleterious lived effects of enacting love in this way. Without grace – something that, I argue below, is enhanced by our participation in building and maintaining a shared world-time – the attentive clear-sightedness that both Murdoch and Heidegger emphasise can push the other away.

On the other hand, I think that a world-time-inflected model of love can also bring something important to Yao's account of attentive, gracious love. One potential concern (perhaps for the lived reality of gracious love more than its theoretical formulation) is how power dynamics within a relationship might affect how this acceptance functions – for example, who is more likely to be expected or conditioned to 'like [the other's] soul the way it is'. It seems that there needs to be another step in addition to seeing and accepting.³⁵ I think that a temporal dimension – or rather,

³⁵ One plausible response to this concern is that Murdoch's own account already provides such a step. As a reviewer for this paper helpfully pointed out, Murdoch's model of vision involves a kind of receptivity that involves more than seeing or accepting. However, I would argue that this nonetheless faces the kind of problem that Yao diagnoses, especially because of its explicitly moral framing. Moreover, within a loving relationship, such receptivity must, I

highlighting a temporality that already underlies these interactions – can help here. If we remind ourselves that the combination of attentiveness and graciousness is not something that happens instantly, but that must develop and adapt as the people involved construct and navigate a shared world, then we arrive at a more pragmatic conceptualisation of acceptance. It is balanced by the compromise and negotiation required to not only build but maintain a shared world over time – and this by participants who are temporal themselves, and whose interactions therefore must involve a mutual negotiation of their individual and shared histories and futures. It is by negotiating the right and wrong moments of doing things, for example, and agreeing upon how to mark time, and redefining the significance of moments together, that love can be attentive and gracious without requiring a dangerous surrender. At the same time, it is through remaining open to the extraordinary – as world-time remains open to the moment of vision – that such negotiations enable rather than foreclose surprise, wonder, passion, and indeed risk.³⁶

World-time and De Jaegher's model of knowing as loving

The other account that I want to connect to my 're-oriented' Heideggerian model of love is one grounded in the ongoing dialogue between phenomenology and the cognitive sciences: Hanne De Jaegher's work within the enactivist approach to cognition that connects knowing to loving. I believe that her framework resonates with Heidegger's phenomenology of love in mutually illuminating ways.

think, be balanced by the kind of mutual understanding that can only fully develop through the negotiation of a shared world over time.

³⁶ Thank you to a particularly insightful Reviewer 3 for making the point that risk remains important to love, and that risk and compromise are better conceptualised as complementary rather than mutually exclusive in this context.

The enactivist approach to cognition defines the latter as the sense-making activity of self-generating, self-maintaining systems.³⁷ For enactivists, cognition is a dynamic, relational process; cogniser and environment are structurally coupled, and collaborate to generate a world of significance defined in relation to the cogniser's needs, capacities and limitations. Crucially, this enaction is fundamentally social; it involves "participatory sense-making", including both "coordination patterns with specific dynamic signatures, as well as [...] an inextricable experiential dimension".³⁸ De Jaegher argues that this enactivist approach to cognition would benefit from seeing the linkages between two activities not often analysed in terms of each other: Knowing and loving. In the words of her recent paper with Laura Candiotta, "loving is a pivot point for understanding how humans know. For De Jaegher, loving is knowing: both loving and knowing are basic, existential ways of relating that involve the lover (or the knower) deeply in what they engage with."³⁹ On the one hand, this involvement is crucial for acknowledging the entanglement of knower and known, lover and beloved; neither relation is entered into from an abstract or neutral standpoint, but is instead grounded in and shaped by the needs and concerns of both parties.⁴⁰ This is especially important, De Jaegher suggest, for helping us understand the motivational factors shaping cognition, especially in more sophisticated organisms; we care about what we know, we know because we care.⁴¹ (Those familiar with Heidegger's work will already

³⁷ De Jaegher summarises the enactive approach in 'Loving and Knowing', 854-857. For other key examples of the enactive approach, see also Varela, Thompson and Rosch, *The Embodied Mind* and Thompson, *Mind in Life*.

³⁸ Candiotta and De Jaegher, 'Love In-Between', 502.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ See De Jaegher, 'Loving and Knowing'.

⁴¹ Ibid., 862.

see interesting resonances here between this approach and his account of *Befindlichkeit*, state of mind.) On the other hand, De Jaegher argues, both loving and knowing also involve a delicate dialectic of involvement and distance, an intertwining that nevertheless lets the other be.⁴² Knowledge and love cannot be successfully attained or maintained if the parties involved in these relationships completely absorb or dominate each other; this is how we get, in the realm of knowledge, gaps between subject and object or versions of idealism and, in the realm of love, unhealthy power dynamics. This can particularly help enactivism to address concerns of subjectivism, of overemphasising the role of the cogniser in shaping its world; De Jaegher suggests that adopting a model of love is well-suited to capturing the need of knower and known to be entangled yet autonomous.⁴³ Again, readers of Heidegger may think here that there are resonances, not only with his model of love, but also his model of truth as unconcealment. Here, to keep things brief, I want to focus on the former. I want to highlight two key points of intersection.

Firstly, I think the Heideggerian phenomenology of love that I have outlined so far would stand to gain from De Jaegher's emphasis on the specificity of the beloved. She asserts that "one cannot love abstractly", something the piece co-written with Candiotta cashes out in terms of transgression and difference (drawing on McLaren and Irigaray).⁴⁴ De Jaegher and Candiotta argue that "we transgress each other all the time"—that is, we are not isolated spheres bumping into each other, but porous, dynamic

⁴² Ibid., 857-862.

⁴³ Ibid., 861-864,

⁴⁴ The quoted phrase can be found in De Jaegher, 'Loving and Knowing', 860 and Candiotta & De Jaegher, 'Love In-Between', 511. For Candiotta & De Jaegher's account of transgression and difference, see 'Love In-Between'.

systems intersecting and interacting; our boundaries are not solid.⁴⁵ “We live in and through each other.”⁴⁶ To resist what they call the ‘fusion’ model of romantic love, which emphasises the surrender or deprioritising of individual identity in favour of the shared identity created by lovers, they argue that a loving transgression must maintain the differences of the lovers, and can indeed only flourish as the communion of differences. This does not mean that the lovers need be different in specific ways; rather, according to Candiotta and De Jaegher, we must acknowledge that they will always-already be different, both to each other and to other versions of their own selves. A loving relationship that escapes the temptation of ‘fusion’ must acknowledge that “[w]e are all of us different bodies, from moment to moment, from place to place, from encounter to encounter, yet we sustain a flow of identity by working at being these bodies.”⁴⁷ Crucially, in doing so, it recognises that the relationship itself is “a third element”, one that does not subsume the identities of any of its participants, but instead adds to the complexities of their worlds.⁴⁸ This takes up two key themes in Heidegger’s account –of love as something that enables rather than suppresses an authentic relationship to one’s self; and of acknowledging the importance of the relationship itself without reducing it to those involved in it (something he accused, in *Metaphysics of Logic*, Scheler of neglecting).⁴⁹ However, it does so in a way that embraces rather than

⁴⁵ Candiotta & De Jaegher, ‘Love In-Between’, 503.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 512.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 517.

⁴⁹ Heidegger, *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik* (GA 26), 163-164. Agamben discusses this in ‘The Facticity of Love’, 187. These are, of course, important themes in the philosophy of love; there are interesting resonances here with both Robert Nozick’s account of the ‘we’ in *The Examined Life* and Robert Solomon’s model of shared identity formation in *Love: Emotion, Myth and Metaphor* (thank you to a reviewer for highlighting the latter).

reduces the concreteness of the other; love here is not object-less, abstract or general, and the beloved is not, in Tömmel's words, "sacralised" or "marginalised".⁵⁰ The enactive model of loving serves as a crucial corrective to Heidegger, reminding us that, in Candiotta and De Jaegher's words:

The movement of loving not only starts in a precise place; it also goes out to a specific place: the loved. In loving, *who* loves matters. Lovers are particular and concrete, and this also goes for what takes place between them: their relation. [...] Lovers are particular and concrete beings, meeting each other in concrete and particular worldly interactions.⁵¹

Secondly, and at the risk of sounding like a broken record, I think that Heidegger's emphasis on the temporality of love in turn adds a vital dimension to this enactive approach to knowing as loving and loving as knowing. This is because these processes only make sense in temporal terms; they presuppose the possibility of generating, negotiating and maintaining a shared temporality structured by the concerns, needs and ends of those participating in it. Generally, participatory sense-making requires a model of time that is 'thick' and practical and intrinsically social; a model of time as, in other words, significant, spanned, public, datable.⁵² This is particularly the case for what Candiotta and De Jaegher call 'loving sense-making'. Consider this description:

Transgression also happens because lovers and their relation (like everything) are continually becoming. Lovers do so in particular ways also because of their

⁵⁰ Tömmel, 'Love as Passion', 242.

⁵¹ Candiotta & De Jaegher, 'Love In-Between', 511.

⁵² See Stendera, 'Dasein's Temporal Enaction'.

relation. A particular becoming takes place here. The particular becomings of the lovers and of their interactions unfold here, take place here, have to be given space here.⁵³

This 'here' cannot be purely spatial if it is to involve the creation and maintenance of a shared world, nor can it be restricted to a simple present; it can only make sense if we think of it as a temporal process within which past, present and future intermingle and co-determine each other, a true "reciprocity"⁵⁴ of memory and anticipation, the interweaving of individual and shared histories and goals.

Beyond this, Heidegger's account also provides a valuable resource here for highlighting what we might call the 'specialness' of love. The kind of shared enaction explored by De Jaegher seems, at times, to be a more general characteristic of intimate sociality; it can become hard to see what differentiates love from other types of relationship. Of course, we might not be worried by this if we think of loving and knowing as profoundly interrelated anyway – though I would argue that we would still have reason to want to distinguish between different manifestations of these dynamics, even if only to explain potential phenomenological variances. We can address this concern by going back to Heidegger's insistence on the difference between love and other contractual arrangements. Recall that, for Heidegger, the 'logic of the heart' is fundamentally non-transactional, non-calculative and non-instrumental. We don't need to go as far as he does in setting up a dichotomy between this and kairological love in order to heed the insight that love needs to be differentiated from at least some types of practical relationships we are going to enter into when enacting and navigating our

⁵³ Ibid., 513.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 514.

shared world. Our social sense-making is always going to be structured by our needs and goals, and sometimes that can take an instrumentalising or transactional form; perhaps, however, it is worth thinking of love as something that cannot be captured in these terms, as an experience that generates a different form of shared world-time – not least because, even though it is not defined in kairological terms, it carries within itself a disruptive, visionary potential.

Concluding remarks

I have argued that Heidegger's model of love, such as it is, elevates the disruptive, kairological temporality of love in a way that minimises love's capacity to generate an ordinary world of shared rhythms, habits and goals. This is deleterious not only because it reduces the role of the beloved to that of a stepping-stone or distant idol in the lover's journey to clear-sighted authenticity, but also due to the false dichotomy it establishes. Heidegger's remarks suggest that we can only choose between experiencing love as either a heroic, tragic state of exception, or a dull, bourgeois transaction; what is missing here is the sense of what Richard Mohr calls "intimacy given substance in the medium of everyday life."⁵⁵ I have also suggested, however, that Heidegger's account has the resources to supply a framework for conceptualising such everydayness; the phenomenology of love is enriched, I would argue, if we look at it through the lens of what Heidegger calls world-time (*Weltzeit*). This gives us a rich temporal vocabulary for what it means to build a life with another, as well as what happens when that life is disrupted. It also, I have argued, resonates with two important contemporary accounts of love – Vida Yao's model of gracious attentive love, and Hanne De Jaegher's analysis of

⁵⁵ Mohr, 'The Case for Gay Marriage', 226.

the similarities between loving and knowing. On the one hand, both Yao and De Jaegher remind us of the importance of centring the concrete, particular other in any model of love, and of ensuring that this is done in a way that tempers clear-sightedness with reciprocity and affection. On the other, the structures of world-time can serve to flesh out the processes that Yao and De Jaegher explore; emphasising that love must happen in time, between creatures who are both temporal and historical, can help to reduce the risks of gracious love, and to illuminate the mechanisms (preserve the specificity) of loving cognition.

In all this, the question might yet remain whether this approach is not too hasty in surrendering the image of love as a kairological crisis, a shattering and re-ordering moment that illuminates our lives in unprecedented ways. However, I am not suggesting that we give this up entirely; rather, we need to see that, for love to be sustainable – for it to be recognisable as a persistent shared experience, instead of being reduced to a handful of fairy-tale moments – it must be able to generate a shared world. There is an everydayness to love that is not dull, an ordinariness that is just as valuable as those rare moments of shattering clear-sightedness; we should aim (to the extent that we can aim at anything at all when it comes to love), not for the latter in isolation, but rather to experience them as points enabling or even occurring against the background of the former. Heidegger argues that originary temporality temporalizes itself as world-time;⁵⁶ and indeed, our participation in one does not preclude our experiencing the other. If we want to bring love into full view while proceeding from a Heideggerian perspective, then we also need to see its temporalities in the same way, to see love's *kairos* and its mode of world-time as intertwined, each shaping how we encounter the other.

⁵⁶ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2), 408.

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