

# Dietrich Von Hildebrand on Love as a Value Response

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**Abstract:** Against all forms of distorted love, Hildebrand asserts that love is a value response to a particular person, an unrepeatable individual who bears the framework of an *imago Dei*. In this paper I argue that this “Hildebrandian “value response” is not a new appellation of the ancient reason for love which is based on the fulfilment of a need but a gift inhering in life itself, which arises exclusively from a participation in the value of the beloved person. In Hildebrand’s “value response” it is not selfish to want to have one’s own subjectivity, to be loved in return, to be happy in loving – as long as these desires are embedded in the value-responding affirmation of the beloved person. Therefore, love can exist only if it seeks no reward, but once it exists, it is rewarded.

**Keywords:** Love, Value, altruism, Eudaimonia, egoism, personality, aesthetic love, *imago Dei*.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In human history, the question of how love ought to be expressed has met with conflicting views. Prominent among these responses are, the physical, the aesthetic and the Hildebrandian conceptions of love.

The physical conception of love, whose proponents include Aristotle, Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Aquinas, considers self-love a necessary feature of all true love and one ultimately finds one’s own good in the love of other humans and God. P. Rousselot contends that Aquinas “combines the view of Aristotle that self-love is the basis of our love for others, with the view of Augustine that in all actions one seeks one’s happiness to come up with the physical conception of love.”<sup>1</sup> A thing is loved to the extent that one attains one’s own good and fulfils one’s natural appetite for loving. The more one gives oneself to others the more one finds and gains oneself.

The ecstatic conception of love severs all the connections linking the love of others to one’s egoistic inclinations; love is a relationship between two terms of love that have no natural relation to each other. Here, love is a free bestowal of one’s personal self to another in dissociation or opposition to one’s wants and desires. Rousselot posits that the “ecstatic conception of love places the idea or aim of love in the complete sacrifice of the lover’s personhood to the beloved’s personhood;”<sup>2</sup> “it is characterised by the predominance of the

idea of person over the idea of nature.”<sup>3</sup> The loving subject is placed outside of itself, up to the point of sacrificing its own good for the beloved, and if it so happens that one gains one’s own good in loving others this is unintentional and merely accidental; hence love is totally disinterested. The ecstatic conception of love has four characteristics: it is dualistic because it involves a relation between two independent terms of love in which the lover gives himself to the beloved with complete disregard for his own good; it is violent because it ignores or even acts against one’s own natural inclination; hence it is essentially wounding and mortifying to the lover; it is irrational because it stems from its not being under the control of reason and sometimes exceeding what is fittingly proper to reason; it is self-sufficient or free because it is chosen for itself alone, finds its justification ground and an end in itself.

It is against this backdrop that Hildebrand asserts that love is a value response to this particular person, this unrepeatable individual who bears the mark of an *Imago Dei*. Is this Hildebrandian ‘value response’ not a new appellation to the ancient reason for love which is based on the fulfilment of a need or just a choice decision to adorn with all supreme qualities someone of agreeable character and then enter into a deep union? Is love not something immanent, a mere invitation to carnal eroticism?

## II. VALUE AND LOVE

According to Hildebrand, value is that which is precious in itself essentially. Values cannot be seen or touched but can be “felt”<sup>4</sup>—an intentional feeling, directed towards the object. According to Scheler, values are *a priori*, objective, universal and absolute though some values like feelings of bodily pain, hunger, are not shared and are wholly individual and subjective. Over and above these values is love, which in his consideration is the most perfect feeling of community. Love (*ordo amoris*) has to do with the preference of a higher value over a lower value within the hierarchical classification of values.<sup>5</sup> This love is the primary movement of the heart

<sup>1</sup> P. Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages- A Historical Contribution*, Alan Vincelette (tr.), Marquette (Milwaukee: University Press, 2001), 82-84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>4</sup> M. Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values: A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, (Evanston IL: North Western University Press, 1973), 20.

<sup>5</sup> Cf., M. Frings, *Max Scheler*, (Louvain: Duquesne University Press, 1965), 67-68.

towards value; it is the only act which “plays the disclosing role in our value comprehensions.”<sup>6</sup>

Though used subjectively as something relative to the person who places a value on a thing, value means something like “precious of itself.”<sup>7</sup> Hildebrand defines value as the “intrinsic importance which an act or a subject possesses.”<sup>8</sup> This is opposed to motivations gotten because of the agreeable nature of things satisfying to us. Certainly those things which we term intrinsically important, those things endowed with value, do possess a capacity for bestowing delight, but the value possesses importance independent of its effects to us. Value does not depend on us the prizers, but we experience it as altogether independent of our prizing.<sup>9</sup>

According to Hildebrand, “Value stands majestically before us, autonomous in its sublimity and nobility; the object’s importance cannot alter, increase or diminish; it stands before us, a message as it were, from on high, elevating us beyond ourselves.”<sup>10</sup> He captures this encounter with objective value when he avers:

*Value elevates us, liberates us from self-centeredness, and reposes us in a transcendent order which is independent of us, of our moods, of our dispositions. This blissful experience presupposes a participation in the intrinsically important; it implies a harmony which is given forth by the intrinsically good, the essentially noble alone; and it displays to us a brightness which is “consubstantial” (congenial) with the intrinsic beauty and splendour of value. In this priceless contact with the intrinsically and autonomously important, the important in itself, it is the object which shelters and embraces our spirit.*<sup>11</sup>

In effect, the deep intuitive experience of value always confers some delight on the experiencing person which only the beautiful can give. In this light, this value is not an aesthetic value. An aesthetic value is subjective in producing aesthetic pleasure. Rather, these values produce a beauty that is not an aesthetic quality but of a certain independent and objective radiance of the character of the subject or object.<sup>12</sup> Value is positive but could also admit of a negative or contrary which is disvalue.

Disvalue is not just subjectively dissatisfying but also “odious of itself.”<sup>13</sup> It lacks the radiance of beauty which is an important component of value because “beauty like all authentic values is a reflection of the infinite glory of God.”<sup>14</sup> Value and disvalue would have no meaning if they were not related to being.

Being understood as that which is, is for Hildebrand, identical with the Divine, the fullness of being. All other beings in the universe participate in God’s being. Because of this, man is a being with a divine bearing (an *Imago Dei*) and he reflects in different ways the Divine Glory, he possesses a certain dignity as person, an intrinsic worth, which makes him different from other objects. To this Scheler like Kant<sup>15</sup> notes that insofar as man is capable of action, he should not be treated as a means because he has an intrinsic value and this value stems from his being.<sup>16</sup>

Value, then, is metaphysically potent since it flows from Being. The expression, *die Welt der Werte*, or the World of Values, expresses for Hildebrand all the depth and plenitude, as well as the hierarchical structure that makes our world a cosmos. The cosmos is made up of value objects and subjects whose value is hierarchical and differs from others. Heidegger considers value as something subjectivistically superimposed on being.<sup>17</sup> Hildebrand instead conceives of “value as nothing other than being in all its dignity, nobility and beauty.”<sup>18</sup> Because of the divine nature of values which originate from being, there is an encounter among values with other values and beings. This encounter provokes a reaction, otherwise known as a value response. This is because there is a very revealing relation in which value stands to the persons who know about it; everything of value is worthy of a right response in virtue of its value.<sup>19</sup> For this reason, persons are worthy of respect; *Being* is worthy of reverence, God is worthy of adoration. Hildebrand holds that “a value response, always takes on a new character by referring to a person, to a conscious subject, to a ‘you’.”<sup>20</sup> An elementary justice is fulfilled when the being that is in some way “precious of itself” receives due response.<sup>21</sup>

The full personalist significance of what Hildebrand calls value response shows itself if we consider response both from the side of value, which merits the response and the human person, who gives the response. A person transcends himself in giving a value response since he considers that the “real signature of the human person lies in this self-transcendence achieved in value response.”<sup>22</sup> This transcendence is because a person who is caught up in the value of something is stepping beyond his own needs to see the world not just as satisfying for him, but for what it is in its own right. According to its own value, one approaches it with reverence, responding to it with a response that is proportioned to, and measured by the value. We are locked in our immanence when we pursue something as subjectively satisfying because we bend the thing to satisfy our needs. Hence, we take no interest in what

<sup>6</sup>M. Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, 261.

<sup>7</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, (Indiana: St Augustine Press, 2009), xiv.

<sup>8</sup>IDEM, *Ethics*, (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1953), 32.

<sup>9</sup>Cf., D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, xiv.

<sup>10</sup>IDEM, *Ethics*, 32.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, xv.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. D. HILDEBRAND, *The Nature of Love*, 86.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. I. Kant, *Groundwork to the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:429/96.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. M. Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, 261.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>18</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, xvii.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>20</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 74.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, xvi.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

it is in its own right. Value response should have a certain priority over all interest in what is beneficial for persons.

In considering the contrast between individual acts of value response with individual acts of being motivated by the subjectively satisfying, he also contrasts two kinds of persons. Firstly, the person who lives primarily by value response never lets self interest in the subjectively satisfying to interfere with reverence towards the world of value. He never pursues the subjectively satisfying at the expense of the call of value.<sup>23</sup> Secondly, we have the person who lives primarily for the subjectively satisfying and in the end ceases even to care about what is precious in itself.

The Beauty of value is thus an object with the power to draw and attract. However, value sometimes has the authority, to bind one in the manner of moral obligation.<sup>24</sup> This obligation provokes a response of the moral entity or person. These values are called the morally relevant values. Hildebrand contrasts them with morally irrelevant values, which are things that form a full contrast with the importance of the merely subjectively satisfying, but are not such as to bind me with obligation. A response may be present or absent in this case since they do not oblige it.

An essential criterion for the rank of moral value is the unconditioned-ness of the will, the strength of commitment, the absolute primacy of morality over everything else.<sup>25</sup> Only moral disvalue (moral evil) offends God. Intellectual disvalues like stupidity or superficiality do not offend God, nor do the aesthetic disvalues of the ugliness or triviality of a work of art.<sup>26</sup>

### III. LOVE

Love is the golden thread running through Hildebrand's philosophy. It is man's whole reason for existing and until he begins to love, he does not really begin to live. Hildebrand, like Aquinas and Wojtyla, considers love to be possible only among persons.

The word love has more than one meaning.<sup>27</sup> Love in the literal sense is a species within quite general phenomena, such as striving for a self-perfection or a movement towards an end.<sup>28</sup> This idea is paralleled in the works of Bernard of Clairvaux when he says: "love unites the lover with what he loves, and ultimately it has to do with an act of the will going out to enjoy and to rest in something or someone as its last end."<sup>29</sup> According to Hildebrand, in love, there is a spiritual movement towards the beloved. This is similar to what Wojtyla enunciates: "Love is always a mutual relationship

between persons. The relationship in turn is based on particular attitudes towards the good, adopted by each of them individually and by both jointly."<sup>30</sup>

Love responds to the ontological value of a person and not to his qualitative values, since it responds to the *Imago Dei* in the other and sees them in the light of a *similitudo Dei*.<sup>31</sup> To achieve this love according to Hildebrand, qualitative disvalues are seen as a contradiction to the *Imago Dei*. It is an inauthentic falling away from it.<sup>32</sup> "Love always refers to an individual and unique person as this individual being."<sup>33</sup> "In love the other stands before me emphatically as a 'thou' and never as a mere 'he' or 'she.' The beloved enchants us, makes us happy by his or her very being and does so all the more when we love."<sup>34</sup>

Hildebrand considers love as a gift and an act of the will.<sup>35</sup> Love is an effective response.<sup>36</sup> The basic attitude of reverence is the presupposition of every true love and reverence for the beloved is an essential element of every love.<sup>37</sup> This is because reverence alone opens our eyes to value men and women as spiritual persons. Without this awareness, no love is possible.

Contrary to this, Sigmund Freud's attempts "to construe love as a sublimated sexual drive,"<sup>38</sup> Hildebrand sees love and sexual drive as essentially two unequivocally different data of which one cannot be reduced to the other.<sup>39</sup>

Hildebrand identifies two categories of love: natural and supernatural love.<sup>40</sup> Natural love (ascending love) includes, the love a child has for his parents and the love parents have for their children, love among friends, love between man and woman and self-love. Supernatural love (descending love)<sup>41</sup> is love for and of God (*agape*) and Christian love of neighbour. Hildebrand introduces *caritas* as a distinguishing factor for natural and supernatural categories of love.

For Hildebrand, love is the most affective value response since the object is involved in a completely new way which essentially involves one's most intimate self, the heart.<sup>42</sup> Secondly, love must not be interpreted in terms of delight, based on the merely subjectively satisfying. The importance of delightfulness only goes to show that love involves a very deep givenness of value; in loving one goes

<sup>30</sup>K. Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, 73.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 70.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. K. Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, 70.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. D. HILDEBRAND, *The Nature of Love*, 41.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>37</sup> D. Hildebrand, *The Art of Living*, (Manchester: Sophia Institute Press, 1994), 9.

<sup>38</sup> *Idem*, *The Nature of Love*, 5

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 268. (See also J. Cowburn, *Love and the Person, A Philosophical Theory and a Theological Essay*, 234).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Benedict xvi, Encyclical Letter, *Deus Caritas Est*, (December 2005), n.

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<sup>42</sup> D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 43.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, xvi.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 85.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>27</sup> K. Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 73.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 3.

<sup>29</sup> P. Diemer, *Love Without Measure, Extracts From the Writings of St Bernard of Clairvaux*, (London: Longman and Todd Ltd, 1990), 13.

deep enough for the beauty of the value of the beloved person.<sup>43</sup> This fact of being delighted by love poses a problem when distinguishing adequately the love between man and woman and mere desire, because delight is common to both cases. The beauty of a woman may awaken mere desire especially for pleasure, in one person and it may awaken love in another person. This is the main difference between love as a value response and mere desire that is not a value response. In desire, a person isolates the qualities and fails to see in them any noble expression of the whole personality of the woman and wants to enjoy these attractive qualities, thus appropriating them for himself.<sup>44</sup> This kind of pseudo-love is what Hildebrand terms “selfish love which is driven by pride no less than by concupiscence.”<sup>45</sup> This kind of love, Johann concludes, condemns one “to the permanent absence of the only good commensurate with the human heart.”<sup>46</sup> Thirdly, in Self-donation, especially in spousal love which is literally giving oneself that is “I am yours,”<sup>47</sup> one wants to belong to the beloved, to give one’s self to her spiritually in love. It is a yearning for fusion with the other.

He also mentions the *intentiounionis*, (striving for union with the beloved person) and the *intentio benevolentiae* (striving to benefit the beloved person). In the *intentio unionis*, whoever loves also desires a spiritual union with the beloved person. Love always desires requital. The full *unio* comes into being only if the love is required. Love has not only the *intention unionis* but also a *virtus unitiva* (unitive power).<sup>48</sup> The *intention benevolentiae* consists in the desire to make the other happy. We find here, “a unique sharing in the other person, a certain goodness felt towards the other, and the breath of goodness... for love is the epitome of all kinds of friendly attitudes to another.”<sup>49</sup> Wishing well for others is not the same as *intention benevolentiae*, because wishing others well involves a deep solidarity with them. The *I-Thou* consciousness is vividly preserved; indeed it reaches a certain unique themacity, in this self-donation. In the phrase, “I am yours,” there is no abandonment of one’s self, because the whole gift that lies in “yours” presupposes that it is a full living person who belongs to the beloved.

#### IV. LOVE AS A VALUE RESPONSE

Scheler, writing about love, lays great stress on its *affective character*. For him, love is a movement of the will and heart from emotions (sympathy) to love. This is because the same person, who loves, must feel something for the one he loves.<sup>50</sup> This idea is taken up strongly by Wojtyla when he asserts: “The emotions themselves of sympathy and liking for the other can commit the will, but only in a passive and somewhat

superficial fashion, with a certain admixture of subjectivism. Friendship, however, demands a sincere commitment of the will with the fullest possible objective justification.”<sup>51</sup> This context sets the stage for Hildebrand’s consideration of love as a value response.

While stressing the great importance of the affective character of love, Hildebrand ponders: Is love something subjective or objective? Is it purely for the good of the person in love at the expense of the other (*eudaemonism*) or strictly involves the other person at the complete extinction of the person loving (altruism) or is it a give-and-take event? With regard to the proper relation of love that one bears for oneself and for other persons, is it a dilemma centred around egoism, self-interest, self-centredness on the one hand and altruism, self-denial and disinterestedness on the other hand?<sup>52</sup>

In the *Symposium*, Plato gives an account of what he considers love to be. He asserts:

*Is the nature of love such that it must be love of something or can it exist absolutely without an object? Is love love of a particular mother or father? ...Tell me whether love means love of something or whether there can be love which is love of nothing?... Does love desire the thing that he is in love with or not?... And does love desire and love the thing that he desires and loves when he is in possession of it or when he is not?... Love exists only in relation to some object and that object must be something which he is at present in want, ... love is in love with what he lacks and does not possess...<sup>53</sup>*

Plato believes that one loves out of need, and one is drawn to the beloved under the aspect of one who can fulfil one’s need.<sup>54</sup> Plato further contends that the generic concept of love encompasses every desire for good and happiness.<sup>55</sup> Johann views Plato’s account of love as basically a matter of longing not benevolence and no matter how nobly and spiritually conceived, is an item of desire, not for its own sake or of satisfying the soul’s hunger.<sup>56</sup>

This Platonic account of love is akin to the physical conception of love. The person who loves should seek his own good and happiness from the other.<sup>57</sup> *Ipsa facto*, there is no consideration of the other, only the self, since it is frequently assumed that self-love is the origin of all love.<sup>58</sup> This means that for one to love another, one must first love the self before one can love another. This is exactly the kind of love that Hildebrand wants to overcome. To him, this kind of love is

<sup>43</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>44</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup>R.O. Johann, *Love in the New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol.8, 1041.

<sup>47</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 52.

<sup>48</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *Man and Woman, Love and the Meaning of Intimacy*, (Manchester: Sophia Institute Press, 1992), 20.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. *Idem*, *The Nature of Love*, 51-52.

<sup>50</sup>Cf. M. Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 154.

<sup>51</sup>K. Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux Inc., 1981), 92.

<sup>52</sup>Cf. P. Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages- A Historical Contribution*, Alan Vincelette (trans), (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001), 12.

<sup>53</sup>Plato, *Symposium*, 199e-200d.

<sup>54</sup>Cf., D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, xxi.

<sup>55</sup>Cf. Plato, *Symposium*, 205e.

<sup>56</sup>Cf. R. Johann, “Love” in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* vol.8, 1040.

<sup>57</sup>Cf. P. Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages*, 78.

<sup>58</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 6.



exploitative, egoistic and uses the other person as a means to one's happiness and perfection. In this regard he bases himself on Kant's prerogative that "act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."<sup>59</sup> This sterility found in egoism leads Wojtyła to conclude that "genuine reciprocity in love cannot arise from two egoisms."<sup>60</sup>

Love for Hildebrand, is a gift which arises exclusively from a participation in the value of the beloved person.<sup>61</sup> In love, there is the specific unfolding of the person and of the transcendence that is proper to that person,<sup>62</sup> which provokes a response to the other as a beloved, not a happiness generating object. Hildebrand fights against *eudaemonism* in love,<sup>63</sup> by identifying the challenge for man to overcome all utilitarian propensities to use another for his sensual or sentimental value.

Plato's eudaemonistic conception of love lacks the transcendence and intersubjectivity proper to love. It fails to consider the subjectivity of the other as person and lacks the union proper to love. Platonic love aims at no requital. Hence, it is not a value response. Thus, eudaemonistic love fails to qualify as love in the Hildebrandian sense. As a result of its limitations, altruistic love which selflessly considers the other, is proposed as a better answer.

Rousselot.<sup>64</sup> questions the possibility of non-egoistic love, especially as every appetite of a being tends toward that which is his good.<sup>65</sup> This is necessarily resolved in altruistic love. According to Dalcourt, altruism in love is a system that reduces all morality to love of neighbour and the basic moral value is to seek the other's happiness.<sup>66</sup> Altruistic love refers to any attitude or position that favours benevolence. Hildebrand describes altruistic love as consisting in "thinking that man achieves full destiny when he no longer has any beneficial goods for himself, when he has become indifferent to happiness and unhappiness to the point of living only by pure value response."<sup>67</sup> Altruistic love is radically selfless and other-centered to the extent that it concerns itself completely with what is beneficial to the other (*intentio benevolentiae*) at the total exclusion of one's own good.

For Hildebrand, the interest of the lover in what is good for him enhances his love. If the lover lacks this interest in his good, an interest always embedded in value-response, his love becomes disfigured, and in the end depersonalized in a certain

way.<sup>68</sup> The altruist thinks love is exclusively a value-response to the extent that the one should renounce every interest in his own good and happiness. In altruistic love "the lover is concerned with all that is good for the beloved person."<sup>69</sup> Chappell explains this further that in renouncing the good for himself that arises from loving, the altruist is motivated to act for the benefit of, or on a reason arising from the beloved solely.<sup>70</sup> This love is radically other-centred in two Hildebrandian ways: he stands in a value-responding relation to the beloved person and he is committed to all that is good for him or her.<sup>71</sup>

The altruist thinks that by loving without any interest he perfects this other-centred direction of love, and so perfects love itself.<sup>72</sup> Hildebrand discards this proposal because the lover "compromises the transcendence of love as 'super value-response' and it interferes with the self-giving proper to love."<sup>73</sup> Also this interference leads to a caricature of love. Thus altruism, while it poses as supreme love, in fact makes a mockery of love. It turns out, then, that the interest of the lover in his own happiness is not just an optional enhancement of love, but is an indispensable ingredient of love, without which love becomes severely deformed.<sup>74</sup>

Hildebrand observes that altruistic love finds its basis and is well ordered in the various supernatural categories of love and by this reason could draw us into the "altruistic mistake". Among these categories is love of neighbour, as exemplified by the Good Samaritan. Now love of neighbour seems to be rather different from the other categories of love with respect to the desire for a return of love.<sup>75</sup>

The Good Samaritan does not wait for the injured man to love him in return, nor will he go away disappointed if his love is not returned. This category of love really is other-centred in a special way. Now if we take love of neighbour as the pattern, then we move towards the altruistic conception of love.

Hildebrand argues that we should not take love of neighbour as the pattern of all love; it is one category of love among others. The love between friends, is categorically very different from love of neighbour, but it is also love; it has the value-responding structure proper to love; but it can be the kind of love that it is, only if each friend is concerned with a return of the other's love and with the happiness of being united with the other. In this regard, Rousselot notes:

*Altruistic love tends to render love either impossible or incapable of rational justification, if loving others is not fulfilling for oneself and indeed if it demands the very*

<sup>59</sup>I. Kant, *Groundwork to the Metaphysics of Morals*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd. 1969), 4:429/96.

<sup>60</sup>K. Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, H. T. Willet (tr.) (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 88.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 58.

<sup>62</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>63</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. P. Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages*, 15-16.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. P. Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages*, 12.

<sup>66</sup>Cf. G. Dalcourt, "Altruism" in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 5, 335.

<sup>67</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 206.

<sup>68</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, xxv.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>70</sup>Cf. T. Chappell, *The Inescapable self: An Introduction to Western Philosophy*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson- Orion Publishing Group Ltd., 2005), 204.

<sup>71</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, 148-149.

<sup>72</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, 206.

<sup>73</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup>Cf. *Ibid.*, xxv.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, 133.

*sacrifice of one's wants, desires and happiness on behalf of those loved, it is hard to see what could motivate one to act in such a manner- a manner so damaging and harmful to oneself. Can there be a self-denying and sacrificial love for others which is at the same time fulfilling and perfective of oneself?*<sup>76</sup>

By considering exclusively the other's good, altruistic love is not seen as requiring requital; it begins and ends with the other, goes beyond oneself but never reaches its final destination, as something mutually shared. Thus altruism and *eudaemonism* in trying to answer the question of love both fail or deviate. Hildebrand, imploring the Aristotelian module of "virtus in medio stat," places love between *eudaemonism* and altruism in considering the response character of love.

Love as a value response bridges the gap between *eudaemonism* and altruism. For Hildebrand it is most important for every kind of love that the beloved person stands before me as precious, beautiful, lovable.<sup>77</sup> Love exists as a response to the intrinsic value of the beloved.<sup>78</sup>

Hildebrand builds on what Aristotle had already expounded on that "true friendship is only possible when it is embedded in the good, because only then are we interested in the other person as person."<sup>79</sup> Hence Hildebrand opines: "the interest that one has for another when one loves him is an interest in the other as person; his existence and his whole being are fully thematic for me."<sup>80</sup>

Hildebrand asserts that the altruist in loving in a "selfless" way depersonalizes himself, though the "theme of love is altogether the other person."<sup>81</sup> This altruistic act is in reality identical with the annihilation of one's existence as person.<sup>82</sup> The altruist is depersonalized as a result of a deficient relation to himself since man is constituted as person not just in the moment of self-transcendence, but also in the moment of relating to himself.<sup>83</sup> Thus the self-transcending, "ecstatic" capacity of the person in value-response<sup>84</sup> is absent in *eudaemonistic* love.

In value-response like the physical or *eudaemonistic* conception of love, it is not selfish to want to have one's own subjectivity;<sup>85</sup> it is not selfish to want to be loved in return;<sup>86</sup> it is not selfish to want one's own good, to be happy in loving—as long, as these desires are embedded in the value-responding affirmation of the beloved. Thus the full actualisation of one's

subjectivity is what forms the antithesis to all egocentricity in love.<sup>87</sup> Love that is required leads to happiness hence Hildebrand contends that one does not want this happiness of being united with the other.<sup>88</sup> Unlike the altruist, for Hildebrand, it is a huge mistake, to see as in any way selfish this longing to be loved in return and this will to be happy by being united with the beloved person.<sup>89</sup> According to Aristotle, love requires reciprocity of mind and will.<sup>90</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas further stresses that love involves a certain affective union of lover and loved which is not found in mere benevolence.<sup>91</sup>

If one's offer of love were in some way conditional on the other person's requital; if one were proposing to the beloved person a kind of contract or exchange—then we would understandably detect something selfish in one's will to be loved in return. But in fact one can love the other unconditionally, even though one hopes for a requital of one's love. This is because love consists in reciprocal interchange.<sup>92</sup> To love in a radically altruistic way produces a deformation of love; to love in a selfish way depersonalises the other, hence love as a value response reforms and personalises the other.

Hildebrand avoids the idea that the beloved person is just a specimen of some excellence or value and is lovable only on the basis of instantiating some excellence or value.<sup>93</sup> If this were so, one would love the value more than the person. Love is a response to a particular value and this value is one with the unrepeatable person of the other.<sup>94</sup>

Love has as its foundation, the thematicity of a person. For Hildebrand, value in love is based on the thematicity of a person because love is always conscious of the preciousness of the beloved.<sup>95</sup> The beauty and preciousness of the beloved is the source of his attractive power. Crosby observes that, Beauty and preciousness are intrinsic to the beloved as wholes not as mere parts of his being.<sup>96</sup> Maritain concurs this point in considering the person as being a whole composed of wholes.<sup>97</sup> Thus Hildebrand contends: "in love, the value and its delightfulness must be of such a kind that it is united with the full thematicity of the person as person."<sup>98</sup> This "value datum is so united with the person that it ennobles the person as such, making him precious." Ones "attention is concentrated

<sup>76</sup>P. Rousselot, *The Problem of Love in the Middle Ages*, 13.

<sup>77</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 17.

<sup>78</sup>Cf. Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1156b25.

<sup>80</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 17.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 75.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., 201.

<sup>83</sup>Cf. Ibid., 201.

<sup>84</sup>Cf. Ibid.

<sup>85</sup>The original term used here is in German, *Eigenleben* and the translator of this work found it difficult arriving at an English equivalent for the term so he settled for *Subjectivity*.

<sup>86</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 213.

<sup>87</sup>Cf. Ibid., 212.

<sup>88</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *Man and Woman, Love and the Meaning of Intimacy*, 9.

<sup>89</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 230.

<sup>90</sup>Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1155b31-1156a5.

<sup>91</sup>Cf. T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 2, q.27, a.2 ad 1.

<sup>92</sup>Here J. Cowburn Quotes St. Ignatius of Loyola in his *Spiritual Exercises*, 231, who considers love to be essentially reciprocal. Cf. J. Cowburn, *Love and the Person: A Philosophical Theory and a Theological Essay*, 150.

<sup>93</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, xxii.

<sup>94</sup>Cf. Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>Cf. Ibid., 18.

<sup>96</sup>Cf. J. Crosby, *The Self-hood of the Human Person*, (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 16.

<sup>97</sup>Cf. J. Maritain, *The Person and Common Good*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), 47.

<sup>98</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 18.

in a particular way on the personhood of the other.”<sup>99</sup> Love affirms the person of the beloved.”<sup>100</sup> Supreme objectivity and supreme subjectivity interpenetrate here.<sup>101</sup>

The beloved is not just a bearer of values or fortunate instantiation of genuine values, but is fully thematic in his beauty and his preciousness, which he embodies in a unique way.<sup>102</sup> Scheler observes that the beloved in a full thematicity acts as an emotional infection with knowledge which culminates in love.<sup>103</sup>

The commitment and transcendence that characterise value response is found only in the love of God and love of neighbour and not in the various natural categories of love.<sup>104</sup> The first dimension of value response is given when it is not only the will but also the heart that responds to the value.<sup>105</sup> The will commits the totality of the whole person in a unique way. Love is the response of the heart par excellence,<sup>106</sup> for an intensification of love takes place through the transcendent involvement of the heart.<sup>107</sup> It contains an element of self-donation and in this way surpasses all other value-responses.<sup>108</sup>

A second dimension of value response comes to light when value confers deep happiness on one. A third dimension is when we see how the good on the basis of its value response becomes an objective good for one in the full sense of the word.<sup>109</sup> The fourth dimension is the *intention unionis* or the desire for union with the beloved person, which involves a still deeper commitment to value.<sup>110</sup> This union is sought for the sake of the beauty and preciousness of the beloved person and not for the sake of the incomparable happiness that it grants.<sup>111</sup> Thus union in transcendence is a theme on its own.

In his treatment of human affectivity, Hildebrand holds that in loving, one takes an *affective delight* in the other.<sup>112</sup> If one exercises only one’s will, but not one’s heart, then however favourable to the other one’s willing may be, however beneficent, one does not really love the other.<sup>113</sup> Due to its affective nature, the heart allows one to be fully present in one’s love, present with one’s whole self, with one’s real self,

and with one’s intimate self. This is possible due to transcendence. In love, one transcends in sincere self-giving of one’s heart to encounter the heart of the other in his or her complete otherness.<sup>114</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, articulates that “man can fully discover his true self only in a sincere giving of himself.”<sup>115</sup> This affectivity of the heart is due to the capacity of value to delight, to affect, to move the heart.<sup>116</sup> Value has the power to *attract or draw* a person that obligatorily addresses one’s will and draws one to another thus addressing one’s heart.<sup>117</sup> The will then achieves a unique kind of transcendence with affective plenitude towards the beloved person which Hildebrand considers to be super value-response.<sup>118</sup>

The objective good of the beloved plays a major role in raising love from the status of value-response to the status of a super value-response.<sup>119</sup> Firstly, love is super value-response because the beloved person is a source of happiness for the one who loves. In the value-response of love, happiness is a secondary theme, that is, it does not deprive, rather, it makes for an intensification of the value-responding interest.<sup>120</sup> Secondly, the interest in the beloved goes so far that he becomes, on the basis of his value, an objective good for me in the strict sense of the word.<sup>121</sup> Finally, love is a super value-response because of its *intentio unionis* and *intentio benevolentiae*, the interest in the beloved surpasses all other value responses.<sup>122</sup> Wadell connotes this thus: “to love is to be possessed by someone else’s goodness and with charity it is to be possessed by the goodness of God.”<sup>123</sup>

These three elements do not exhaust the extraordinary self-donation and transcendence of love but are profoundly interrelated. Value, in principle, addresses every person in the same way, whereas the objective good for the person addresses in each case a particular person. Now Hildebrand argues that one gives oneself to the beloved in a unique way by willing to be the source of her happiness and by willing to receive from her one’s own deepest happiness.<sup>124</sup> This self-giving is based on what is objectively good for a person. J. Edwards supports this by stating: “nothing can be given the name love ... if it militates against the other person’s good, whether the other person be man or God himself.”<sup>125</sup>

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

<sup>100</sup>D. Hildebrand, *Man And Woman, Love and the Meaning of Intimacy*, 13.

<sup>101</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 207.

<sup>102</sup>Cf., Ibid., 19.

<sup>103</sup>Cf., M. Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 15.

<sup>104</sup>Cf., D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 83.

<sup>105</sup>Cf., Ibid., 84.

<sup>106</sup>Cf., Ibid., 84.

<sup>107</sup>Cf., D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 87.

<sup>108</sup>Cf. Ibid., 84.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Ibid., 85.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 85.

<sup>111</sup>Cf., Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Idem, *The Heart, An Analysis of Human and Divine Affectivity*, (Indiana: St Augustine Press, 2007), 67.

<sup>113</sup> Hildebrand quotes St Augustine’s *Tractate 26 on the Gospel of St. John*, here saying “*parum voluntate, etiam voluntate trahimur*”- “it is not enough for us to be moved by the will, we must also be moved by delight,” this delight is specifically found in the delight of the heart in love. Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 93.

<sup>114</sup>Cf. Hildebrand, *The Heart, An Analysis of Human and Divine Affectivity*, 67.

<sup>115</sup>Vatican II Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (7 December 1965), n. 24.

<sup>116</sup>Cf., D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 93.

<sup>117</sup>Cf., D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 94.

<sup>118</sup>Cf., Ibid., 174.

<sup>119</sup>Cf. Ibid., 118.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., 145.

<sup>121</sup>Cf. Ibid.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid.

<sup>123</sup>P. Wadell, *The Primacy of Love, An Introduction to the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 92.

<sup>124</sup>Cf. D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 119.

<sup>125</sup>J. Edwards, *Ways of Loving*, (Exeter: Family Publications Wheatons Ltd, 1989), 3.

In principle, “every agent acts for the sake of an end,”<sup>126</sup> and men act for certain objectives which they hope to achieve; otherwise they would not act, since they would then realise that their activity would be useless.<sup>127</sup> In this case, Hildebrand identifies this end to be happiness.<sup>128</sup> He identifies three ways of experiencing love: “in loving, in being loved, and in the awareness of the love existing between two other persons.”<sup>129</sup> “There is in all positive affective value responses a source conferring happiness in the broadest sense of the word; the existence of the good that we respond to confers happiness all by itself.”<sup>130</sup> With love, the very fact that the beloved person exists, is a source of happiness.<sup>131</sup> The beloved person represents an objective good for one, one is enchanted by his nature and personality. His beauty and preciousness affects one’s heart. In transcending one’s subjectivity to return his love in total self-giving (*Hingabe*), one experiences happiness in an incomparable way.<sup>132</sup> Love is the full actualisation of the person<sup>133</sup> and the lover becomes himself more loveable by loving,<sup>134</sup> thus, the one that loves can never separate his happiness from the other who is the source of it. A love that engenders no happiness would be no real love.<sup>135</sup> True happiness is found in requited love; the pain of unhappiness is greatest in unrequited (spousal) love, where the term “unhappy love” originates.<sup>136</sup>

#### V. ALTER EGO, LOVE AND KNOWLEDGE

The concept of love as value response avails us the opportunity of considering the other as an “other self,” an *alter ego*. In this light, we would be in perfect harmony with the Hildebrandian thought pattern, but can one lay claim to an *alter ego* when one hardly shares knowledge of, and in this case talk of love or does one’s love presuppose this knowledge of the value of the other, thus a response? How does the concept of an *alter ego* assert itself, when an aspect of the other is idealized, which if not holistically considered degrades the other. To this tension, Marion posits:

*Properly speaking, she (the lover) does not know that which she loves, because what one loves does not appear before one loves it. It is up to the lover to make visible what is at issue—the other as beloved... Knowledge does not make love possible, because knowledge flows from love. The lover makes visible what she loves and, without this love, nothing would*

*appear to her. Thus, strictly speaking, the lover does not know what she loves—except insofar as she loves it.*<sup>137</sup>

By “sizing up” a person’s qualities the objective way of looking cannot lead one to love this person. The “other” is considered only as a composite of qualities; an object and not a beloved person. Thus, love precedes knowledge and makes possible the appearance of the “other” as beautiful and lovable.

Brummer articulates that Marion’s claim of knowledge flowing from love is taken to task when the world says of the lover, “we do not know what he sees in her.” Is this because his love has opened his eyes to perfections in his beloved for which the world is blind or because his love has provided him with illusions about his beloved which the world does not share?<sup>138</sup> This opens us to the possibility that love is either a response to an illusion or knowledge of the beloved precedes the response of love.

Hildebrand’s conception of love as a response to a value in the beloved is coated with an epistemological flavour where love and knowledge enjoy a mutual relationship. The lover knows what value is by “grasping the essence”<sup>139</sup> or apprehending this value and identifying this value in the beloved, he is conscious of the response to this value, and in the process enters into a loving relationship with the other who in turn requites this love based on the same epistemological foundation. Love does not merely endow the beloved with imaginary perfections but with “certain real charms and qualities.”<sup>140</sup> Marion does not consider beauty’s engendering power thus making love precede all that one apprehends in the beloved. He introduces “the principle of insufficient reason” in explaining the initiative of the lover since the lover loves without the support of any knowledge of apprehended beauty in the beloved. This tension grows into a conflict of superiority/inferiority between knowledge and love. It is no longer a matter of priority. But which is superior, love or knowledge?

This conflict is resolved by considering a mutual relation existing between love and knowledge. The beauty of the lover engenders love and motivates love, consequently, the priority of love over knowledge. But beauty must be apprehended, empowering the lover to see more deeply into the person of the beloved, thus the priority of knowledge over love reasserts itself. This comes to the limelight with the participation of the object in the value. Augustine contends that in the love for

<sup>126</sup>T. Alvirat alii, *Metaphysics*, (Manila : Sinag-Tala Publishers, Inc., 1982), 223.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., 219.

<sup>128</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 221.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid., 222.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., 223.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., 227.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., 228.

<sup>134</sup>Ibid., 233.

<sup>135</sup>Ibid.

<sup>136</sup>Ibid., 230.

<sup>137</sup>J. Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon*, Stephen Lewis (trans) (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), 87.

<sup>138</sup>V. Brummer, *The Model of Love: A Study of Philosophical Theology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 47.

<sup>139</sup>Simple apprehension is the first stage in the process of knowing. Cfr. P. GLENN, *An Introduction to Philosophy*, (USA: B Herder Books Co., 1943), 164.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. V. Brummer, *The Model of Love: A Study of Philosophical Theology*, 49.



something, a communion with the thing surpasses all knowing.<sup>141</sup>

Sherwin notes two Augustinian principles that: love depends on knowledge because nothing is loved unless it is known and that our moral knowledge depends on love because our love shapes how we view things.<sup>142</sup> In Aristotelian consideration, knowing is an intentional becoming of the object.<sup>143</sup> The implication of Aristotle's contention for Aquinas is that the participation of the knower in the thing known makes "love to have a greater unifying power than knowledge."<sup>144</sup> Aquinas insists that love follows on knowledge and also precedes it, since there is no passion of the soul that does not presuppose some love. "Love moves reason to discern well."<sup>145</sup> Hence, we agree that knowledge is initiated by love and accompanied by love for love presides and inspires even knowledge, thus the movement of the intellect is started by love.<sup>146</sup> Knowledge has priority in showing and attaining the beloved while love has priority in moving toward the beloved.<sup>147</sup> Neither knowledge nor love takes priority over the other nor is one superior to the other.

Marion invokes his "principle of insufficient reason"<sup>148</sup> to explain the incomprehensibility of the logic of love vis-à-vis response due the beloved. He is indirectly saying that there must be reasons enough which stand the scrutiny of rigorous logical analysis, to explain why a person should be loved. This principle creates an abysmal trench between Marion and Hildebrand. Unlike Marion, Hildebrandian love idealises the value of the human person. Every person is equally worthy of love. The "insufficiency" is an insufficiency of reasons to formulate for loving this person not an insufficiency of beauty appearing in the beloved and eliciting the love of the lover.

The mysterious choosing of the beloved is not made understandable by the absence of any knowledge of the beloved, but by the presence of a kind of knowledge of the incommunicable preciousness of the beloved.<sup>149</sup> Comparison cannot be made at the level of the incommunicable persons because persons are incommensurable with each other and so are incomparable with each other.<sup>150</sup> Knowledge by making comparison is not possible but it is a kind of knowledge, a kind of reason for loving which defies syllogistic reasoning of mathematical equations of Descartes making it "useless and

uncertain"<sup>151</sup> in the words of B. Pascal, but is easily explainable with the reasons of the heart. Hildebrand explains the insufficient reason by the ineffability of the beauty of the beloved which is primarily captured by the heart. The "heart is more the real self of a person than his intellect and will and it is the true self insofar as love aims at the heart of the beloved."<sup>152</sup> Love is univocally the voice of the heart<sup>153</sup> and as B. Pascal explains "the heart has its reasons which reason does not know."<sup>154</sup> Love involves a conversation of two hearts in communion, as Newman articulates: "*Coradcorloquito*" The heart knows in ways foreign to the intellect, and according to Newmanian-Pascalian epistemology, the heart is equally trusted as a way of knowing.

The logic of love dictates that in love the heart is to be trusted not the head. Lovers have never been seen to propose to each other syllogisms as the basis for their love. The lover's love does not provide the rest of the world with special knowledge about the lover himself, hence the insufficiency of reason. De Beauvoir contends that to the world love is looked upon as "tinged with mysticism,"<sup>155</sup> "since the standard of perfection by which one judges his beloved are a manifestation of his innermost character. Thus, in love we find the most decisive symptom of who a person is."<sup>156</sup>

In stressing the response character of love, the lover is conceived as too reactive<sup>157</sup> which deprives love of its gesture of taking the initiative and giving. Love thus registers what is given in the beloved and reacts in proportion to the excellence of the beloved. The lover just gives the beloved what is her due in justice. Marion claims that by placing the entire source of his advance in his free initiative, not on some beauty eliciting, we capture the freedom of the lover's gift.<sup>158</sup>

On the contrary, Wojtyla echoing the gift nature of Hildebrandian love contends that the beauty of the beloved does not oblige but love remains a free spontaneous act, the basic requirement for the gift of the person.<sup>159</sup> Wojtyla further reiterates that in love, the gift of the person is not exhausted but tends also towards its continuation and awakening of new life in community.<sup>160</sup> The lover's whole being is involved as from his heart he genuinely and permanently wills the good for/of the other (*vellebonumalicui*).<sup>161</sup> Because of this

<sup>141</sup>H. Arendt, *Love and St Augustine*, Joanna V. Scott and Judith C. Stark (eds) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 9.

<sup>142</sup>Cf., M. Sherwin, *By Knowledge and By love, Charity and Knowledge in the Moral Theology of St Thomas Aquinas*, (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 116.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. A. Llano, *Gnoseology*, (Manila: Sinag- Tala Publishers Inc., 2001), 25.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. T. Aquinas, *SummaTheologiae*, I-II, q.28, a.1 ad 3.

<sup>145</sup>Ibid., II-II 47.I ad.I.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. M. D'ARCY, *The Mind and the Heart of Love*, (London: Collins Clear-Type Press 1954), 410

<sup>147</sup> Cf. M. SHERWIN, *By Knowledge and By love, charity and knowledge in the Moral Theology of St Thomas Aquinas*, 116.

<sup>148</sup>Cf. J. MARION, *The Erotic Phenomenon*, 87.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. M. SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 97.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. P. KREEFT, *Summa Philosophica*, (Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2012), 106-107.

<sup>151</sup> B. PASCAL, *Les Pensees*, T. S. Eliot (intro) (USA: E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1958), 78.

<sup>152</sup> D. HILDEBRAND, *The Heart- Analysis of Human and Divine Affectivity*, (Indiana: St Augustine Press South Bend, 2007), 67.

<sup>153</sup>IDEM, *Man and Woman, Love and The Meaning of Intimacy*, 9.

<sup>154</sup> B. PASCAL, *Les Pensees*, 277.

<sup>155</sup>S. de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*. (New York: Bantam Books, 1961), 610.

<sup>156</sup>V. Brummer, *The Model of Love: A Study of Philosophical Theology*, 49.

<sup>157</sup>Cf. J. Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon*, 87.

<sup>158</sup> Cf. Ibid., 76.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. K. Wojtyla, *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 305.

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Ibid., 306.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. D. McInerney, *Natural Theology*, (Elmhurst Pennsylvania: Priestly Fraternity of St Peter, 2005), 262.

freedom, beauty elicits “the total love that results from the mutual gift of persons.”<sup>162</sup>

Marion contrasts between unsubstitutable beloved and the anonymous other as encountered in transactions of commercial exchange.<sup>163</sup> In commercial transactions nobody cares for the personhood of the other, the only point of focus is the item of trade. This is contrary to love, in which the beloved stands as thematic in himself. Hildebrand holds that the value to which love responds must be a value that the beloved is entirely a thematic- unrepeatabe person.

This value to which love responds is beauty. It is clear that the characteristics which make something beautiful arise, from its act of being.<sup>164</sup> Somebody is beautiful in the fullest sense (*simpliciter*) if he possesses all the perfections that correspond to his own nature,<sup>165</sup> this perfection is found only in the unsubstitutable personality of the beloved.<sup>166</sup> Thus the value found in the beloved is unsubstitutable just as the beloved is unsubstitutable.<sup>167</sup> Hildebrand finds this on the metaphysical principle that being is one, true, good and beautiful and these transcendental properties are interchangeable, hence *ens et bonum et pulchrum convertuntur*.<sup>168</sup>

#### VI. VALUERESPONSE OF LOVEIN THE LIGHT OF FREUDIAN IDEALISATION OF THE LIBIDO

Wholesale misunderstanding of what love fundamentally is has been rampant since the advent of “Freud’s deification of the sexual instinct and the subsequent deification of Freud himself.”<sup>169</sup> Belief in Freud and his psychoanalytic credo have created a “pseudo-sexual revolution”<sup>170</sup> which starts with a new idea: great sex, authentic sex is something spiritual, a product of love.<sup>171</sup> Mullaney describes modern day sexual revolution as a “phony, the direct product of the cockamamie ideas of a coke-head, Sigmund Freud. Freud’s cocaine addiction led directly to a worldwide wrongheaded view of sex.”<sup>172</sup> Love is not Lust neither is it sex but the “Sexual revolution equates love to perversion (sex).”<sup>173</sup> Hence viewed thus, love is defined in nothing other than the three letter word - sex.

Mullaney posits that Freud trashed love and then transformed it into a virulent mutant distortion of sex.<sup>174</sup> Freud’s followers enshrined the sexual drive, the libido, as the primal factor governing human behaviour and thereby created a loveless

world and a sex-full world. Thus, “the enshrined sex drive was a god. Love was then reduced and trivialised as a sexual by-product, and the actual God debunked as the “father image projected (onto) the sky.”<sup>175</sup> Freud replaces beauty as a value in Hildebrandian love with sex and the libidinal instinct. Hence Freudian redefinition of Hildebrandian love becomes “love is a sex response or a response to the sex instinct.” Freud’s deification of the libido, questions the Hildebrandian system in terms of the value of the human being, the subjectivity and transcendence due man in love.

Scheler agrees with Hildebrand that love promotes positive values of personality,<sup>176</sup> but Freud’s agenda views man’s value only in terms of how much erotic pleasure he provides. Freud’s erotic man relates to others in terms of what Buber describes as an “I-It.”<sup>177</sup> Man is an object (*It*) to be used. Though the “sexual urge is a natural drive in all human beings, a vector of aspiration,”<sup>178</sup> man is created in the image and likeness of God, thus he has a dignity as a person. Maritain contends that “man’s specific dignity stems from the fact that man is a person who holds himself in hand by his intelligence and will.”<sup>179</sup> Mournier, expounds three properties due man’s personhood: vocation, action and communication.<sup>180</sup> Man’s vocation is to love, an action which involves a communication of hearts.

Wojtyla’s conception of person, emphasizes the fact that the human being is a *someone* as opposed to a *something*, the highest perfection in the created world – *perfectissimum ens*.<sup>181</sup> He reflects the Buberian personalism of an “I-Thou,” (*Ich-Du*) opposed to an “I-it” (*Ich-Es*) relationship. Love is a basic component of man’s “I-thou” relationship thus enhancing his dignity as person. Consequently, “Love ‘enthrones’ the beloved person, a unique kind of throne but without the appreciative character of veneration.”<sup>182</sup> According to Levinas, “Love remains a relation with the other,”<sup>183</sup> a relationship between two persons who are “radically other.”<sup>184</sup> Love is purely a gift<sup>185</sup> between persons. It is a value-response, thus Hildebrand avers:

*In a value response there is a unique encounter of the subject and object. The subject or person engages the good with its value and is conscious only of the good and its value. But at*

<sup>175</sup>S. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, (New York: Doubleday, Garden City, 1957), 88.

<sup>176</sup>M. Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 140.

<sup>177</sup>M. Buber, *I and Thou*, S. RONALD (tr.), (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1958), 34.

<sup>178</sup>K. Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, 46.

<sup>179</sup>J. Maritain, *The Rights of Man and Natural law*, D.S. Anson (tr.), (New York: Gordian Press, 1971), 6.

<sup>180</sup> Cf. B. Mondin, *Philosophical Anthropology*, 254.

<sup>181</sup> Cf. K. Wojtyla, *Person and Community*, 167.

<sup>182</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature Of Love*, 65.

<sup>183</sup>E. Levinas, *Totality And Infinity- An Essay on Exteriority/Alterity*, Alphonso Lingis (trans.), (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Duquesne University Press, 2007), 254.

<sup>184</sup>Ibid.

<sup>185</sup>D. Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*, 58.

<sup>162</sup>K. Wojtyla, *Person and Community*, 306.

<sup>163</sup>J. Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon*, 77-78.

<sup>164</sup>Cf. T. ALVIRA *et alii*, *Metaphysics*, 167.

<sup>165</sup>Cf., *Ibid*.

<sup>166</sup>Cf. K. Wojtyla, *Person and Community*, 231.

<sup>167</sup>Cf. IDEM, *Love and Responsibility*, 121.

<sup>168</sup>Cf. T. Alvira *et alii*, *Metaphysics*, 157.

<sup>169</sup>B. Mullaney, *Authentic Love, Theory and Therapy*, St. Pauls, New York 2008, 427.

<sup>170</sup>*Ibid*, 427.

<sup>171</sup> Cf. *Ibid*, 424.

<sup>172</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>173</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>174</sup>*Ibid*, 429.

the same time, the person grows in a unique way in giving himself to the good. The dignity of the person and the whole new dimension of being that only a person can have is actualised in the value response... Here in value response we find the deepest and most significant collaboration of subject and object - the specific unfolding of the person and of the transcendence that is proper to the person.<sup>186</sup>

Even though in Arendt's view, Augustine defines love as a craving (*appetitus*),<sup>187</sup> a motion towards somebody, this craving instead of using someone as a sex object considers "love as nothing else than to crave for something for its own sake."<sup>188</sup> This relieves Hildebrand's point that love is a value response to the beloved as this unrepeatably, dignified being, sought for its own sake not for the sake of sex as Freud would have it. Hildebrandian love "is not love without sex; it is love that finds in the body and in human relationships a route toward eternity."<sup>189</sup>

The human person is a reality which stands above all empirical objects and has a value and dignity which can neither be undermined nor encroached upon. Each person is a person by his own right and should not therefore be used as an object, or be seen as a threat to the other's world. In considering the other as a threat, Sartre declared that "hell is the presence of others,"<sup>190</sup> and in this same vein is Nietzsche for whom society is a "scaffolding by means of which a select class of beings may be able to elevate themselves (...) to [a] higher existence."<sup>191</sup> Hildebrand acts as a corrective to these views.

Instead of a system that degrades the value and dignity of the person, Wojtyla authenticates Hildebrand's plight when he posits that the human person should not be used as a means to an end, as an instrument; their personal distinct ends must be realized and recognized as different from others.<sup>192</sup> Wojtyla follows Kant's imperative that the person is supposed to be treated as an end-in-himself,<sup>193</sup> even more rigorously, Kant posits that respect for the dignity of the human persons is a duty and an obligation.<sup>194</sup> Buber puts it nicely thus: "I have my origin from my relationship with the 'thou;' when I become 'I,' then I say 'thou.'"<sup>195</sup> The "I-Thou" finds its fruition in love.

The notion of personality as subject involves totality and independence, no matter how poor and crushed a person may be, he is a whole and subsists in an independent manner. Maritain posits: "to say that man is a person is to say that in

the depth of his being, he is more a whole than a part and more independent than servile."<sup>196</sup> Man's subjectivity, thus considered, enables him to go beyond, to transcend himself in love. This transcendence is totally absent in Freud's erotic man. In transcendence, man's heart is opened up to a new possibility, *the other as person*. Personality means interiority with regard to oneself but precisely because it is spirit that transcends man. It transcends his individuality. Freud's erotic man remains in this interiority but lacks the transcendence of love. Love is an inter-subjective transcendence of my person to meet the person of another.

Love, therefore, in Hildebrandian phenomenology, is 'self-giving' love to another self; it is a process whereby the person cannot talk of "myself" without reference to "ourselves." Wojtyla's corroborates Hildebrand in his "metaphysics of love" which begins by first of all reiterating the incommunicability of being and then expounded on the vocation of the human person which for him is to "love person."<sup>197</sup> As a result, the Cartesian paradigm, *cogito ergo sum*, can be rightly replaced with the personalist jargon as represented by Hildebrand thus: *amo ergo sum*. An act of genuine love is made manifest in a value response towards the beauty of the other.

## VII. CONCLUSION

To the perennial question, what is love and how should it be lived, C.S. Lewis posits that love is a relation among persons which, overcoming the recalcitrant claims of self, can generate and maintain in a community of vicariousness and reciprocity.<sup>198</sup>

Hildebrand opens a new window perceiving love as a response to the person of the other. In this encounter, the beauty of the other shines while pulling and motivating the lover to respond. In this response, happiness which is a natural result is mutually shared to the extent that there is a total, complete and exclusive mutual self-giving of selves, which enhances a fostering of each other's dignity and an attainment of mutual perfection. This response to the other ultimately ends in a response to God. This shows that human love is but a finite participation in God's love.

Man in having a will, naturally desires the good. A finite being's love for his own good is and it would seem cannot but be interested, how then can we demand of him a disinterested love? Love seeks no recompense for if it did it would at once cease to be love. But neither should it be asked to renounce the joy in the possession of the thing loved, for this joy is essential with love. Love would no longer be love if it renounced the accompanying joy. Thus, all love is at once disinterested and rewarded and that it could not be rewarded unless it were disinterested because disinterestedness is its

<sup>186</sup>Ibid.,60.

<sup>187</sup>Cf. H. Arendt, *Love and St Augustine*, 9.

<sup>188</sup>Ibid.

<sup>189</sup>T. More, *The Care of the Soul*, (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994), 81.

<sup>190</sup>J. P. Sartre, *No Exit*, 167-168.

<sup>191</sup>F. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, (New York: Penguin Books Ltd., 1990), 258.

<sup>192</sup>K. Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, 28.

<sup>193</sup>Cf. J. Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1999), 140.

<sup>194</sup>Cf. Ibid, 132-133.

<sup>195</sup>M. Buber, *I and Thou*,34.

<sup>196</sup>J. Maritain, *The Rights of Man and Natural law*, 11.

<sup>197</sup> Cf., K. Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, 41.

<sup>198</sup> Cf., G. Meilaender, *The Taste for the Other, The Social and Ethical Thought of C. S. Lewis*, (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1978), 62.



very essence. Love can exist only if it seeks no reward, but once it exists it is rewarded.

The person is always a person-in-community. As Aristotle puts it, the human being is a social animal. To be human is to belong and yet to stand apart, always at the same time. We are social beings by nature, love is the expression of the intrinsic bond that sustains our intrinsic connections to others. Love is neither reducible to sex nor lust.

Every manifestation of sex produces an effect which transcends the physical sphere and, in a fashion quite unlike the other bodily desires, involves the soul deeply in its passion. The unique profundity of sex in the physical sphere is sufficiently shown by the fact that man's attitude towards it is of incomparably greater moral significance than his attitude towards other bodily appetites. Surrender to sexual desire for its own sake defiles and degrades a man. It wounds him to the core of his being, and he becomes in an absolutely different and novel fashion guilty of sin. Sex can indeed keep silence, but when it speaks it is no mere *obiter dictum*, but a voice from the depths, the utterance of something central and of the utmost significance. In and with sex, man, in a special sense, gives himself.<sup>199</sup>

Hildebrand identifies the great errors that always abound concerning the human person. One of such errors is that which sees all human responses, and therefore love, as means to self-gratification. There is then the more modern error, especially egregious since Freud, which interprets all love as being rooted in sex drives, whether explicitly or not. This latter error becomes at least plausible when spousal love is at stake. For such a love occurs between the sexes and certainly is linked to sexual union in a dramatic way. How natural, then, is it to say that love is but a sexual drive in the first place or at least to say that in the best analysis love is but a spiritual friendship between two persons, with sex merely superadded. Far from being a youthful lunacy, genuine spousal love stirs us in our depths. Our heart cries out for requital. The intentions of union and benevolence, to be found in all real loves, find here their most insistent voice. Love seeks self-revelation and self-donation to the loved one. Love is of the heart.

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<sup>199</sup>D. Hildebrand, *In Defense of Purity*, (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1935), 14.



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