

The Remembrance of Place

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Remembrance is placement into being itself – Martin Heidegger.

There is a long tradition that takes thinking, and especially philosophical thinking, to be essentially a form of remembrance. This tradition is particularly strong among thinkers within the hermeneutic and phenomenological traditions. Thus Martin Heidegger famously takes the thinking of being as essentially the overcoming of a form of forgetting.¹ Yet as remembrance, thinking is also understood as a return, a coming-back, a placing or re-placing – with the caveat that it is a placing back into that which we never really leave.² The connection between thinking, remembering, and placing that seems to be so evident within phenomenology and hermeneutics – even if not always directly thematized – surely derives from the character of phenomenological and hermeneutic inquiry as always determined by a concern for that which is *given*, for what is *present* to us (which is nevertheless not given in such a way that its presence can ever be completely elucidated in the present). To attend to what is given in this way is thus always to attend to that place within which things can come to presence; a place within we ourselves are oriented and located. If thinking is remembering, then it is a re-remembering that is also always a re-emplacing – a re-emplacing back into that place in which the world first emerges, and in which we encounter ourselves no less than the things around us.³

As it stands firmly within a phenomenological tradition, so Ed Casey's work exhibits this same entanglement of thinking with remembering and with placing. Part of what is especially noteworthy about Casey's work, however, is that it also thematizes this very entanglement. This is true of Casey's work even prior to the ground-breaking explorations of place and memory in *Remembering* (the book in which these connections first emerge in his work in a fully developed fashion), and has remained true into and through his more recent work.⁴ For me, Casey's work has been inspirational in exemplifying a mode of philosophical thinking that is attentive to place and memory, while also providing one of the pioneering explorations of those same concepts – an exploration that continues to move into and explore new territories.

Part of the interest and significance of Casey's work is that it opens up new questions and new domains of inquiry, and in so doing also opens up possibilities for dialogue and debate. In this essay, I want to return to an issue that opened up between Casey and myself some years ago, in an exchange over my book, *Place and Experience*, that focussed in part on what Casey then called the 'perdurance' of place,⁵ and that seems itself closely connected to an argument advanced by Casey in *Remembering* to the effect that place imparts a 'fixity' to memory that memory would not otherwise possess. Casey's response to my own work in that exchange was, as it has always been, while not uncritical, extremely generous (indeed, it is one of the hallmarks of Casey's thinking that, in contrast to much contemporary philosophical engagement, it begins from a position of generosity and a desire for genuine engagement), and I am very appreciative of the contact I have had with Casey over the years. The issue to which I want to return here, then, does not represent a point of deep division between us, but emerges as significant only because of what unites us, especially our common concern for place, and for memory. Preliminary to that issue,

however, I want first to recapitulate some of the background to my own and Casey's discussion of memory elsewhere – especially the way place emerges in that discussion. A key issue here is the role of temporality, and so also the relation between place and time, and between time and space.

Let me begin, then, with a question Casey himself puts, in *Remembering*, concerning the relation between memory and time: "Isn't memory a matter of the past? Is it not primarily a temporal phenomenon? How can we think of it otherwise after Kant and Husserl – not to mention Aristotle, who said straightforwardly that 'memory is of the past'?"⁶ Casey's response is that if remembering were indeed a purely temporal phenomenon, then "It would remain largely disembodied".⁷ We might also ask, however, what it could mean for memory to be purely temporal – could we even make sense of such an idea? My own view, and one that I have argued for elsewhere, is that memory – or at least those forms of memory that involve some personal as opposed to generic content (although one might say that such 'generic' memory, understood as the mere retention of information or image, is memory only in an impoverished sense) – cannot be understood independently of the place in which the memory is located. As such, memory always stands in relation to the temporal *and* the spatial, which are themselves held together in place. Memory that was disembodied, that was therefore unplaced, would be no memory at all.

The placed character of memory can be understood to derive in part from the placed character of *content* (in which case, not only is 'personal' memory tied to place and placedness, but even what I referred to earlier as 'generic' memory is similarly place-dependent). The argument to this conclusion can be briefly summarized. Content arises only through the interconnection of contentful states within a network of other such states, and through the relatedness of the creatures who are possessed of such states to a wider world

of things, other such creatures, and events in which they are embedded. Moreover, the sort of interconnection that is at issue here is not the interconnection that might be thought to obtain among a single extended network of states that are somehow all present at once. Content (or more broadly, *meaning*) is itself always locally constituted, that is, it is formed around specific clusters of memories, beliefs, actions and so forth. Content is thus itself organised *topologically* – it is always ordered in terms of specific *localities* – and this topological ordering mirrors the topological ordering of agency and action (in which the topology takes on a more self-evident and concrete form).⁸ The topology at issue here is not static (properly understood, no topology is so), but is rather a dynamic and complex unity in which the elements within it are constituted through their constant interaction. This interaction always takes place within certain indeterminate boundaries and with respect to a certain point of focus – a point of focus that, in the most basic cases, is located *in the world*, and so is causally affecting and affected through perceptual stimulation and behavioural response. The operation of memory is itself dynamic in this fashion – a matter of the constant unfolding of remembrance in a way that is interdependent with the unfolding of thought and action, and of self and world.⁹

The ideas that are at issue here, especially the notion that subjectivity and objectivity are in some sense co-relative notions, have an important genealogy in Kantian and post-Kantian thought. In Kant's own work one finds an argument, famously developed in the 'Refutation of Idealism', but seemingly at work elsewhere also, to the effect that the very possibility of content – understood in Kant in terms of the possibility of knowledge or meaningful experience – is dependent on the capacity to distinguish oneself as the one who knows or experiences from that which is known or experienced (and this requires, as I note below, both spatiality and temporality).¹⁰ In the work of Donald Davidson, whose own

holistic externalism was implicit in many of my comments on the nature of content above, a similar notion is expressed in terms of the necessary interdependence of knowledge of oneself with knowledge of others and of the world – the subjective is interdependent with the intersubjective and the objective – and this structure of interdependence is also explicitly elaborated in explicitly topographical terms.¹¹ Here the necessity of place appears, not only in terms of the interconnected nature of content itself, but in the very 'structure' (by which I mean a certain ordering of inter-related elements) that underpins content, and that presupposes the articulation of the self as worked out only in and through its social and environmental placidness. Although neither express it in this fashion (and their failure to do so has itself led to some problematic readings), the structure at issue, for both Kant and Davidson, is properly an ontological one – it cannot be construed as either 'subjective' or as merely 'epistemological'.¹²

This last point is an absolutely crucial one. Inasmuch as the topology that I have briefly outlined above is fundamental to the very possibility of content, so it also delineates the mode of existence that is instantiated by creatures capable of genuinely contentful thought (what Davidson calls 'objective thought') or experience. Moreover, it is not a topology that describes only the *topos* that belongs to content understood as 'subjective', and so as given only within the supposed privacy and 'internality' of the mind (the very idea of such 'internality' is itself brought into question here). What is at issue is rather that broader *topos* within which both subjectivity and objectivity, internality and externality, mind and world, emerge only in contrast to, and interdependently with, one another, and in which the possibility of representation first comes into view.

Spatiality plays an important role here, since it is spatiality that is essentially to the possibility of co-present existence – and this is, in fact, what also makes spatialization

essential to the possibility of representation. In this respect, the structure that is evident in the structure of content, and that presupposes relationality or connection between states, operates in an analogous fashion with respect to co-present particulars in general.

Relationality as it obtains with respect to states requires states that mutually connect to one another, at the same time as they can also be distinguished. Such relationality between states does not require, at least not directly, a physically realised separation between those states in space (although, indirectly, states are distinguished through their differing relations to spatially and temporally distinct elements of the world), but any representation of those states, for instance any linguistic representation, does indeed require distinct spatial instantiation (whether in the form of what is spoken, signed, or *inscribed*).

The possibility of subjectivity, in any fully-realised sense, requires representation (which need not take the form only of words or sentences), but it consequently also requires that the subjective be capable of being distinguished from the objective (which is precisely what spatiality partially enables). Yet equally, as we saw in the discussion of the relationality of content, the idea of co-present existence cannot entail merely the being present together of completely static elements. Co-presence, while it requires spatial differentiation, also requires that such differentiation be worked out and articulated through the dynamic interaction of those elements. This space becomes spatial only through time, while time becomes temporal only in space. It is this temporalizing of time and the spatializing of space (a way of putting things that originally appears in Heidegger¹³), that is the happening of place - a happening that cannot be reduced to time or space alone, nor to any simply conjoining of these understood as otherwise independent elements. Nor can this happening of place be construed as a subjective happening, or as objective either, since it is that on which the very distinction between subject and object depends. The

topology that is evident here embodies and expresses the necessary interdependence and interrelation that obtains between spatiality and temporality, as well as between subject and object, between self and other, between self and world.

Although memory is often understood in ways that obscure, through the focus on the temporal, the topology in which memory is embedded, the investigation of memory can nevertheless also enable that topology to be brought to the fore in an exemplary fashion. Here is where a large part of the philosophical significance of Marcel Proust's monumental work, *In Search of Lost Time*, is to be found. Through the close, almost phenomenological, attention to the character of memory and remembering, Proust brings to light the character of memory as no less tied to space than to time, and the genuine possibility of a recovery of time and of self, through place.¹⁴ Gaston Bachelard's similarly intense explorations of intimate space in *The Poetics of Space* – an exploration that he himself describes as a form of 'topophilia' – is also drenched in memory, and one gains from both writers a sense of the remembered, and of remembering, as encountered only in the dense materiality of places, spaces, and things. It is no accident that in both my own work, and in Casey's, Proust is an important figure (and Bachelard remains always present, even if only in the background). For me, Proust's thinking feeds into an analysis that also finds sources in Kant, in Heidegger, and in Davidson, while in Casey, it is the relation that exists between Proust and thinkers such as Merleau-Ponty, a relation that draws out the phenomenological elements in Proust, that seems most prominent even if it sometimes remains implicit. What is crucial here, no matter whether one's approach is through phenomenology or some other form of 'analysis' is that memory seems to retain its essential connection to place in spite of its tendency to be taken up into the thinking of time. Perhaps this also indicates the extent to which time

might retain within itself its own pathway back to place – although this is a matter that, for the moment, will need to be left to one side.

In *Remembering*, Casey also follows a trail from memory to place. His route is not only more heavily dependent on the markings laid out by the phenomenological tradition, however, but it is one that looks more specifically to the phenomenon of *embodiment* for its direction.¹⁵ Yet the approach that Casey adopts should not be seen as opposed to the analysis I have provided. Indeed, the way Casey derives the necessity of embodiment from the need for perspective and position can be taken to be analogous to the point I made immediately above concerning the dependence of meaning or content on place. Whatever else one says about embodiment in this context, the bare notion of embodiment that Casey deploys seems essentially a matter of *emplacement*. To be embodied is, *ipso facto*, to be emplaced, and it is the role of place, rather than of the body alone (whatever that might be), to which Casey draws attention. Indeed, in the account that Casey lays out of the history of Western philosophical thinking about place in *The Fate of Place*, it is the focus on the body that provides one of the key means by which place reappears, and that there operates as a counter to the priority given to space, just as, when it comes to memory, it also operates as a counter to the priority accorded to time.¹⁶

That the importance of place to memory has been forgotten in the face of a philosophical preoccupation with the temporal dimensions of memory is partly a consequence of the way memory has itself been understood. Yet it cannot be treated as a result only of a failure to attend to the placed character of memory as such. Indeed, it also derives, perhaps more fundamentally, from a more general and pervasive philosophical tendency to give priority to *temporality* in the understanding of the world, and especially in the understanding of the human. Indeed, inasmuch as the focus on the human has often

come to take the form of a focus on the *subject*, so the subject has also come to be understood in temporal terms: in many respects, within modern thought, subjectivity *is* temporality. So strong is this tendency that a recent history of 'continental' thought, John McCumber's, *Time and Philosophy*, takes time as its primary focus,¹⁷ and this can indeed be said merely to reflect the modern preoccupation with the twin themes of subjectivity and temporality. Such 'temporalism' is a feature of modern thought even among those thinkers who might otherwise be thought to attend specifically to the placed character of existence. Thus Heidegger's *Being and Time* is, as Heidegger himself acknowledged, rendered problematic partly by its attempt to make time the foundation even for space (and some residue of that temporalism remains in Heidegger's thinking almost to the very end), as well as by the subjectivist tendency that itself seems embedded in Heidegger's own understanding of time and space within that work. Indeed, the centrality of *Being and Time* in twentieth-century European thought is in part due to the way it represents the culmination of a certain temporalist trajectory in thinking, at the same time as it is also positioned within the development of Heideggerian topology in which it is place that comes increasingly to prominence.¹⁸

In the face of such temporalism, there is a strong tendency, particularly when it comes to the discussion of memory, to counter the over-emphasis on time by instead emphasising space – and this is a point to which I shall return. Yet strictly speaking, unless one is careful here (that is, unless one retains a clear grasp on the way time and space, and so also subjectivity and objectivity, while distinct, nevertheless belong together), such a counter-move threatens to remain within, and even to reinforce, the same problematic dichotomy on which temporalism is itself based. This is one reason why place, as that in which time and space, as well as subjectivity and objectivity, are held together, is such a

central concept here. Moreover, the rise of a temporal prejudice in thinking is itself a consequence of the demise of place, and the separation out of the notion of place of discrete concepts of space and time, just as it is also associated with a tendency to give diminished attention to the singularity of existence and so to its associated embodiment. In this respect, I would argue that the rise of space that Casey charts in *The Fate of Place* is also accompanied by a rise in the concept of time – so that what we see is indeed the relative disappearance of place as a result of its dissolution into its temporal and spatial aspects – although it is the rise of a concept of time that is itself constantly threatened by the overarching dominance of a particular conceptualisation of space. If, within the history of western thought, time comes increasingly to be associated with a distinct notion of subjectivity, then so also is space increasingly associated with an equally distinct notion of *objectivity*, and it is the objective that often exercises the greater influence.

The separating out of space and time is thus parallel to the separating of subject from object, with the consequence that both pairs of terms, rather than being viewed as co-relative, appear as apart from, although potentially threatened by the other. The different tendencies in thinking to which the bifurcation of place into time and space thus gives rise to obvious tensions – tensions that can be seen to run throughout much of modern and contemporary thought. While the thinking of subjectivity seems to lead inexorably towards the primacy of temporality, there is also a tendency for temporality to fall under the sway of spatiality, and so under the sway of an objectivised mode of understanding. Thus, within modern thought, one finds both a shift towards the assertion of the temporal over and against the spatial at the same time as one also encounters the rise of an all-encompassing notion of spatiality. Almost certainly, these tensions are inevitable once one separates out notions of time and space, and so also of the co-related notions of subjectivity and

objectivity, from the more primordial concept of place. Equally inevitable, would seem to be the tendency for these tensions often to be resolved in favour of the dominance of spatiality as it is conjoined with objectivity. Nowhere is the dominance of an objectivised spatiality more evident than in modern physical theory in which time increasingly appears as merely another dimension additional to the spatial dimensions.¹⁹ The so-called continuum theory of space-time does not establish the proper belonging together of the temporal with the spatial (which is one reason why space-time is quite distinct from the time-space that figures in Heidegger's middle and later thinking²⁰), but rather the incorporation of the temporal into a mode of the spatial. Essentially time becomes another form of objectivised *extension*.

Any genuine rethinking of memory cannot be pursued other than in connection with the rethinking of place – the rethinking of the one is intimately bound up with the rethinking of the other. It is thus that Casey's exploration of memory in *Remembering* leads him in the direction, not just of body, but also of place itself, and why too the detailed investigations of place that have followed in works like *Getting Back into Place*, *The Fate of Place*, *The World at a Glance* and elsewhere seem not only to take the form of a remembering, but also to move always within the same neighbourhood, so that the investigation of place is never far removed from the investigation of remembering. Yet given the history of western philosophical thought that lies in the background, which Casey himself partly uncovers in *The Fate of Place*, then the rethinking of memory and place that is required here cannot be pursued independently of the rethinking of time and space, as well as of subjectivity and objectivity. If Casey does not always, in his own investigations, directly thematize the rethinking of these latter concepts (although the possibility of a different thinking of space differently is certainly theme that appears in *The Fate of Place*), this is only because these

are already largely taken up in the rethinking of place itself, and in Casey's close attentiveness to the phenomena at issue (the lack of any direct thematization may also be said to follow from Casey's more phenomenologically *descriptive* approach). The way the question of memory does indeed open up into the question of place, and thereby also into questions of space and time, subject and object, self and world, is testimony to the philosophical significance that attaches to memory. The rethinking of memory is not just a rethinking of some particular capacity or mode of engagement; instead genuinely to approach the question of memory – of remembering or of remembrance – is also to approach the question of thinking and of place, of thinking as itself remembrance, and of remembrance as itself placing.

Much of what I have said so far is broadly in keeping with Casey's own account, even though I have sometimes drawn on different sources and adopted a more 'analytic' style of approach. Indeed, as I emphasised from the start, there is much more in our respective accounts of memory and of place that unites rather than divides us. Thus we both take place and memory as tied together, and we both also take place to occupy a central role in our thinking. Yet Casey seems, at least in *Remembering*, to maintain a certain ordering of the relation between memory and place that is absent from my own account. Specifically, Casey argues that the stability that seems to belong to memories – a stability that is at the heart of the possibility of remembering – derives from the way memories are contained spatially, which means, the way memories are held *in place*. In fact, it is this line of reasoning that seems to underpin Casey's claim – and the claim itself is one with which I concur – that memory and remembering cannot be primary temporal in character. Time, argues Casey, is essentially dispersive, whereas it is space, and properly place, which also means our bodily emplacement, that gathers and holds memory – and so Casey concludes that "If memories

are motionless, this is the work of the places in which they come to inhere so deeply".²¹

Here place seems to have a certain priority in relation to memory – memory, one might say, begins in place.

The considerations that lead Casey to this conclusion are deeply bound up with his rethinking of place (indeed, it is a notable feature of Casey's exploration of memory in *Remembering* that place seems to emerge of its own accord into the centre of his account), and his recognition of the centrality of place, not only to memory, but also to human existence as such. They derive from Casey's own phenomenological investigations, and are reinforced by consideration, among other things, of the ancient tradition of the 'art of memory'. The *ars memorative* takes memory to be closely associated with place, and uses this as the basis for a technique of remembering that operates through the connecting of what is to be remembered to specific things or locations that are housed within a larger architectural structure – within a theatre or palace of memory.²² Here, it seems, is a neat exemplification and demonstration of the powerful connection of memory to place, and more than this, of the way place does indeed serve to fix memories and to enable remembering. The 'priority' of place in relation to memory that seems to become apparent here (and I use the term 'priority' here with some caution since it is not a way of putting things that appears in Casey) leads to a similar priority being accorded to place in relation to time. If time contains an essential mobility within it, such that it constantly disperses, then "by its very immobility – through the stolid concreteness of things set within pathways and horizons – place acts to contain time itself", and Casey adds "This is not to trivialize time but to make it into a dimension of space through the active influence of place".²³ Here place takes on a solidity, a relative permanency even, that seems directly counter-posed to the apparent fluidity of time.

Elsewhere, in a discussion of my work, this emphasis on place as acting to "contain time" appears in a slightly different, but nevertheless related way, in terms of what Casey refers to as the *perduring*, or "relatively persistent", character of place,²⁴ in contrast to my own tendency to talk of the 'fragility' of place. My point was not to deny that places may indeed appear as perduring, but rather to emphasise the character of human selves as possessed of an essential fragility in virtue of their necessary entanglement with place. In *Place and Experience*, the use of the term 'fragility' was intended to evoke a set of ethical considerations: that which is fragile is also that which can only be sustained through care and attentive concern, and its fragility may even be said to underpin its significance and worth. The fragility that I argue attaches to human selves or persons, and not solely to human lives, is a fragility that reflects the fragility of place, but, once again, this is not in the sense that places lack any capacity to endure. Indeed, the enduring of place does not itself occur merely through the standing-firm against change or loss, and certainly not through any simple resistance to time. The enduring of place occurs through the constant and dynamic unfolding of place itself, and this enduring is also compatible with place's essential fragility. Such fragility is a consequence of the complex and dynamic relationality that is constitutive of place, just as it is also constitutive of the human. The fragility of place means that place too requires our care and concern – not only in the sense demanded by contemporary environmentalism (although that is not absent), but in the sense in which the 'happening' of place (which is also the happening of time) is something to which we contribute just as we are also shaped by it, and in which our own being is thereby at issue.

The sense of place that appears here, according to which place is dynamic, complex, and essentially relational, seems to be powerfully present in Proust's work. It is one reason why that work is not to be construed as straightforwardly a work *against* time, even though

it is a work against a certain *conception* of time – namely, a conception of time that sets it apart from place. The topological investigation of memory that appears in Proust's *magnum opus* can be taken to begin with a problem that is set by the idea of memory as purely temporal, and of the temporal as associated only with inevitable and irretrievable loss. Yet what Proust attempts is indeed, as the longstanding English translation of the work as *Remembrance of Things Past* obscures, but the original French *À la recherche du temps perdu* ('in search of lost time') makes clear, is indeed a *recovery of time*, and thereby also a recovery of memory. It is this 'lost time' that is supposedly regained by the end of the novel, whose final volume thus bears the title *Time Rediscovered (Le Temps Retrouvé)*. The loss of memory is a loss of self, and this too is apparent in Proust, in which the story of the novel is largely the story of Marcel's recovery of himself through a process of writing and remembrance that is also a recovery of the world, and that is accomplished through a recovery of the reality of experience in its embeddedness in the dense materiality of things – a materiality which is itself a constant happening or presencing. The movement into memory is thus, for Proust, not a movement into a lost past, nor into a static, unmoving space, but into a presencing place, a happening world. Much the same is true of Bachelard also, for whom the intimate places of the home are not places that are experienced simply as remnants of what was, valuable for what they somehow partially restore to us, nor as fixed locations for what is simply present, but rather as dynamic and relational. The opening into the world in the place of the home is thus also an opening into and of the self – an opening that is possible only through the engagement with memory, for it is and through memory, and through the connection of memory to world in place, that the self is given form and content, that the self is placed.

It is noteworthy that, in the passage I quoted above, Casey himself indicates that his emphasis on the 'perduringness' of place is "doubtless as a result of having come to the topic itself from an earlier treatment of 'place memory'". The idea that places 'fix' memory through bringing time into the domain of space, and so of place, can certainly be seen as another form of the idea that places endure, and one might argue that a concern with how memory might be fixed in the face of the dispersing tendency of time could indeed lead to a conception of place as enduring, and so as providing the requisite fixing of memory. On this reading, the effectiveness as a mnemonic technique of the practice of associating what is to be remembered with a specific location within a larger locational structure – the technique associated with the *ars memorativa* – could be seen to itself derive from the character of places as having this capacity to resist the fluid and mobile character of temporality. Yet in this latter case, the supposed power of place to resist the temporal, and so to give a secure foundation to memory, is surely cast in question by the fact that the places – the specific locations and the larger locational frame that encompasses them – that are deployed by practitioners of the *ars memorativa* need not themselves have any existence other than *as remembered*. What the *ars memorativa* and the method of *loci* may thus be taken to show is not so much the character of place as a foundation for memory, but rather the way place and memory are essentially intertwined (and are both relationally articulated). A similar point can be made in relation to the supposedly enduring character of place. The endurance of place can be said to depend on the enduring character of *memory* that allows us to grasp a place *as the same*. Moreover, as in the case of the *ars memorativa*, this does not show that place is therefore any less significant in relation to memory, but quite the opposite – memory and place are shown to be even more closely linked than might be suggested by the idea of place as somehow the foundation for memory: to remember is to

re-engage oneself, or to be so re-engaged – and perhaps the reverse also holds, perhaps *to be engaged is also to remember*.

In some respects, Casey's emphasis on place as perduring and as what gives fixity and stability to memory can be seen as itself arising out of a reaction against the temporalist prejudice that I discussed above. As such, it can also be read as depending upon an opposition between the supposed mobility and fluidity of time and the relative fixity and stability of space, and so also of place. The way Casey maintains place as the key concept here means that his account avoids the mistake of simply countering the temporal with the spatial, and yet the nature of that account also seems implicitly to set place in opposition to the temporal, rather than allowing the temporal aspect of place itself, or better, the topological character of the temporal, to be drawn forth. Memory does not stand apart from place, so that perhaps the very idea of place-memory already has the capacity to mislead in that it suggests that there is a specific form of memory that belongs to place, whereas memory stands essentially in a relation to place, so that all remembering takes place in and through place – and not only those memories that are specifically of particular places. Casey is right to claim that memory cannot be wholly temporal in character, and he is also correct when he argues that if it were it would be "largely disembodied", which is also to say, given what Casey adds later, that it would lack perspective and position. Such a purely temporalized 'memory', if that makes any sense, would also, in lacking any sense of its own *placedness*, lack any sense of its own *subjectivity* (which means it would lack any sense of objectivity as well) – which simply underlines the extreme difficulty, if not impossibility, of making sense of such a notion. Yet it is easy to miss the fact that an exactly analogous point can be said to apply in respect of space (even though the point is clearly evident from the perspective of memory): if one looks to a purely spatial frame, and not

only with respect to the purely temporal, there is no perspective or position either. The reason for this is simple: space cannot, on its own, provide any genuine sense of orientation, because orientation presupposes a potential for action (it is not a matter of any merely static positioning), and in the absence of time, neither action nor the potential for it are possible. To take the point a little further, neither can one think embodiment in purely spatial terms (something that might be seen as already suggested by the idea present in Aristotle's *De Anima* that the body only is a body inasmuch as it moves or has the capacity for movement). The symmetry that obtains between space and time here, and that means that almost any claim one might make that seems to give priority to space over time, or time over space, can almost invariably be reversed, applies equally to an idea that seems to lie in the background of Casey's argument concerning place as fixing memory, namely, that time disperses while space gathers.²⁵ Just as time is necessary for orientation, so one might be led to argue that it is time that gathers, while space disperses. This is, in fact, just how Heidegger views matters in *Being and Time* where the spatial dispersal of Dasein is overcome through the unifying character of ecstatic temporality.²⁶ In fact, neither time nor space alone has the character of being solely unifying or dispersing, just as mere space does not have the capacity to stabilise nor time alone to orient.

In the final chapter of *Remembering*, Casey notes the character of his analysis as having an apparently 'extero-centric' direction – as taking memory outward from the mind into the world. The idea of space and place as giving fixity to memory would seem to be an important instance of this sort of outwardly directed movement. Yet as Casey also notes, such extero-centrism might seem to give rise to a loss in any sense of memory as personal or as one's 'own' – a loss of the way memory connects to the self. In response, and taking a cue from Heidegger, Casey argues that memory is essentially that 'in-gathering' by means of "we

finally become ourselves"²⁷ – an in-gathering that not only encompasses the formation of memories (as well as forgetting), but also their inter-weaving in such a way as to constitute an over-arching sense of personal identity.²⁸ What is at issue in Casey's discussion is a problem familiar from the history of philosophy (at one point Casey quotes from Locke's famous discussion on personal identity): how are we to understand the unity of the self? In Casey's account, place, and so also space, enables memories to be localised, but that localisation is external, and so, as Casey acknowledges, seems not to carry any sense of the way memories are personalised, or, as one might also put matters, of the way memories are unified as being 'mine'. As set out in the concluding chapter of *Remembering*, Casey's response seems to depend on taking the self to be unified by *memory*, through treating memory as essentially unifying, although what is unified is both the self, which is made from memories, and also the memories of which the self is made (since part of what is at issue is the 'mineness' of those very memories). The difficulty, however, is that this seems simply to assert the character of memory as unifying rather than to explain it, and to do so, moreover, in the face of an initial question directed at the unity of memory as such – since it is the apparent externalisation of memory, and so, in a certain sense, its *dispersal* in relation to the self as that occurs through its *fixing* in relation to space and place, that gives rise to the seeming depersonalisation of memory. From a temporalist perspective, one might be inclined to argue that the problem that appears here is the inevitable result of the neglect of time in favour of space, and that the issue of the unity of the self and of memory can only be resolved by recognising the essentially temporal character of both, and also the character of time as that which properly unifies (which is more or less the approach exemplified in *Being and Time*). Yet as we have already seen, time alone, nor more than space, cannot achieve the unity that is required here. The problem is not one to be solved

by appeal to either temporal or spatial analyses alone, not even by a spatial analysis that incorporates time into space, and space into place. Nevertheless, place is the key concept that is needed here, and Casey's discussion does indeed move in the right direction.

Casey's treatment of memory as 'in-gathering' leads him to argue for what is an essentially topological conception of the very nature of memory. Thus Casey talks of memory as "a matrix of matrices" that is both formal and material. Its material character is given in "the thick autonomy through which [the] subject realizes its freedom" and its formal character is evident in memory as a "topologically defined network in which items can be allotted locations".²⁹ 'Matrix' is one of the terms sometimes used as a translation for the Greek term *chora* as it appears in Plato's *Timaeus*,³⁰ and the term is also variously translated as space, 'interval', or place. Casey's own use of 'matrix' reinforces the connection with space and place such what might be said to appear here is an account of memory *as place*, and as a place that also incorporates other places within it. Place itself exhibits much the same material and formal properties, the same depth and open extendedness (the latter being one way of understanding the idea of 'a topologically defined network'), that in Casey's account accrue to memory. On the face of it, however, this seems not to be especially promising as a way of dealing with the supposed 'extero-centrism' that Casey acknowledges as a potential difficulty, since such 'extero-centrism' seems itself to arise as a result of Casey's emphasis on precisely the character of memory as tied to space and to place. Certainly, there is a potential problem if one treats the account of place at issue here as one that is indeed oriented towards the spatial over and against the temporal. Yet although he does not himself present them this way, the two dimensions that are identified in Casey's discussion of memory as matrix seem obviously to connect with what are properly the two aspects that belong originally to place, namely, time, which here appears as

freedom and depth, and space, which here appears as the open domain within with a network of locations is possible. In this way, one might say that memory turns out to be the original interplay of temporality and spatiality within the overarching unity of place (a unity based, it should be noted, in place as essentially *bounded*), which operates both in relation to the internality, which is also externalised, of the self, and the externality, which is also internalised, of the world. Casey's treatment of memory as matrix, *of memory as place*, can thus be seen to put into question the very dichotomy that appears to be at work in the idea that Casey's topological account of memory might be overly 'extero-centric', and that it may thereby lead to a neglect of the 'internality' that seems to belong to the self and is evident in the 'mineness' of memory, just as it also seems implicitly to assert the essential interconnection of the temporal and the spatial in place *and* in memory.

The question of the unity of memory and of self, which is also the question of the autonomy of memory, is resolved in Casey's account, even if this is somewhat obscured, by reference to the unity of place itself – the 'in-gathering' character of memory is nothing other than the 'in-gathering' character of place. This is a conclusion that may already be thought to be presaged by Casey's own emphasis, in arguing against the character of memory as only 'of the past', on the need for memory to be embodied, and so for memory to be placed, especially since Casey also seems to see this as operating against the supposedly dispersive character of time. Yet, as we saw in the discussion above, the placed character of memory cannot be understood in terms that privilege the spatial over the temporal. Both place and memory have an essentially temporal and spatial dimension. Moreover, although place encompasses both externality and internality, and memory can be understood as both internalized and externalized, when considered in relation to place, then one can properly characterize memory in the following terms: *memory is the*

internality of place. This means that the self has to be understood as itself a formation of place that occurs within place even as it also constitutes a certain mode of place. It also means that place never appears other than as it is already taken up in memory, even if the memories that attach to any particular place are fragmentary, associative, or recent – only on the basis of memory are we oriented, and only as we are oriented are we placed. We thus find ourselves in the world, which means we only find ourselves at all, in and through memory, and although memory is itself only to be approached in and through place, we cannot approach place independently of memory either. Consequently, if we are to say that memory begins in place, so we must also say that place begins in memory – to remember is to be emplaced, and to be emplaced is, indeed, to remember.

Notes and references

¹ See Casey *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, 2nd edn. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000, first published 1987), pp.8-9; see also *Remembering*, pp.302ff.

² See Malpas, *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012).

³ See *ibid.*

⁴ Of those earlier essays, some are collected together in *Spirit and Soul: Essays in Philosophical Psychology* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1991).

⁵ See Casey, 'J. E. Malpas's Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography (Cambridge University Press, 1999) Converging and diverging in/on place', *Philosophy and Geography* 4 (2001), pp.225-230, and also Malpas, 'Comparing Topographies: Across Paths/Around Place: A Reply to Casey', *Philosophy and Geography* 4 (2), pp.231-238.

⁶ *Remembering*, p.181.

⁷ Ibid., p.182.

⁸ See my discussion in, for instance, *Place and Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1999), chapter three.

⁹ See *Place and Experience*, chapter three, and also *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place*, chapter ten.

¹⁰ See *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), B274-279; see also my discussion in 'The Constitution of the Mind: Kant and Davidson on the Unity of Consciousness', *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, (1999), pp.1-30.

¹¹ See especially Davidson, 'Three Varieties of Knowledge', *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), pp.205-220.

¹² See *Donald Davidson and the Mirror of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), or more recently 'Philosophy, Topography, Triangulation', in Maria Cristina Amoretti and Gerhard Preyer (eds.), *Triangulation From an Epistemological Point of View* (Frankfurt: Ontos Verlag, 2011), pp.257-280.

¹³ See *Contributions to Philosophy*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999), see esp. §§267-268 and §§238-242.

¹⁴ See my discussion of Proust in *Place and Experience*, chapters six and seven.

¹⁵ *Remembering*, p.182.

¹⁶ See *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

¹⁷ McCumber, *Time and Philosophy: A History of Continental Thought* (London: Acumen, 2011).

¹⁸ For an account of this development, see Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006).

¹⁹ See the discussion in Huw Price, *Time's Arrow and Archimedes' Point: New Directions for the Physics of Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

²⁰ See my discussion in *Heidegger's Topology* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), chapter three.

²¹ *Remembering*, p.215.

²² See Casey, *Remembering*, pp.182-183; see also Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).

²³ *Remembering*, p.214.

²⁴ Casey, 'J. E. Malpas's Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography (Cambridge University Press, 1999) Converging and diverging in/on place', pp.227-228.

²⁵ See *Remembering*, pp.181-182.

²⁶ See my discussion in *Heidegger's Topology*, pp.96-146.

²⁷ See *Remembering*, p.299.

²⁸ See *Remembering*, esp. pp.294-295.

²⁹ *Remembering*, p.294.

³⁰ See *Timaeus*, 48e-49a.