

The House of Being: Poetry, Language, Place

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I. One of the characteristic features of Heidegger's later thinking is its concern with language. Indeed, one might say that the centrality of this concern is a clear marker of the more strongly hermeneutical character of the later thinking (the thinking of the post-war years especially) compared to the earlier¹ – a character that is present in spite of Heidegger's explicit claim to have abandoned hermeneutics (or, at least, to have abandoned the term) in his later work.² The concern with language in the later Heidegger also coincides with a more explicit turn towards the topological – towards *topos* or place (*Ort/Ortschaft*).³ This is no mere coincidence. Not only are the topological and the hermeneutical themselves bound together,⁴ but Heidegger's topological 'turn' (which is really a *return* to something that is present throughout his thinking) itself develops out of his increasing engagement with both language and poetry especially as this is mediated through the work of Hölderlin.⁵ That these three – place, language, and poetry – are indeed tied together in the later Heidegger is especially evident in the 1947 'Letter on "Humanism"'. There Heidegger famously characterises language as "the house of being", adding that "in its home human being dwells".⁶ The themes of home and dwelling, and the very nature of the language that is invoked here, are connected directly back to Hölderlin⁷ in a way that is continuous with the engagement with the poet that had been underway in Heidegger's thinking for at least the previous fifteen years (from the early Hölderlin lectures beginning in 1934 to the *Ister* lectures of 1943⁸), and that would continue long after (including the 1959 volume *Unterwegs zur Sprache*⁹). Heidegger's discussions of language and poetry, and especially his relation to Hölderlin so far as these matters are concerned, have often taken the attention of commentators, but the way language, poetry, *and place* come together in late Heidegger, and especially the place of language within

the topology of being, is seldom remarked upon – perhaps unsurprisingly given the lack of real attention that is given to place in particular.

Yet it is not only the topological character of language – or even of language *and poetry* – that is brought into view here. When Heidegger talks of language as 'the house of being', what is at issue is as much the idea of the 'house', and what it is 'to house', as is the idea of language or, indeed, of being. The house is itself a topological concept – a mode of place and placing – perhaps one of the most basic modes of place and placing. The house is that within which one dwells, that in which one is given a place, afforded shelter, and allowed rest as well activity; through its delimitation of space, the house grants space, room, dimension. This remains true regardless of the emphasis on the homelessness of our contemporary condition, or even of the critique of home as a site of oppression, subjugation, or violence. What is at issue is not merely the house or home in its contingent instantiations, but the house as that which does indeed give place to being. To be the house of being, in Heidegger's formulation, is also to give home to human being. To dwell is to find oneself housed, to be 'at home'. Once again this does not mean that one finds oneself secured against all uncertainty or questionability, but rather that one first finds oneself first placed in the world, and in being so placed, one's own being appears as an issue. In this fashion, only the one who is already at home, can be 'homeless'; only the one who is already housed can be in need of 'housing'. Gaston Bachelard writes that "on whatever theoretical horizon we examine it, the house image would appear to have become the topography of our intimate being",¹⁰ and although this claim plays out in a number of different ways in Bachelard's work, it nevertheless indicates something of the fundamental nature of the house, and so also of home, *as topological*, and so also *as ontological*.

In claiming language as the house of being, as that in whose home human beings dwell, Heidegger claims this very nature *for language*. Language is thus that within which one dwells, which gives place, affords shelter, and allows rest and activity. One may even be led to say that, if language is the house of being, then

there must also be a sense in which language itself grants space, room, and dimension precisely through its delimitation of space, room, and dimension. Part of the task before us is to understand both how and why this might be so – *what does it mean for language to have such a nature?* – but equally significantly, the task is also to understand the topology that is at work here. How can we speak of the house – and so of place or dimension – as belonging to the character of language or of being? What does it mean to speak of them in this way?

In the 'Letter on "Humanism"', Heidegger comments that "one day we will, by thinking the essence of being in a way appropriate to its matter, more readily be able to think what 'house' and 'dwelling' are"¹¹ – suggesting that we think less readily in such a way now. The comment comes in the context of a warning against reading the phrase 'the house of being' as if it were merely an "adornment of language" or involved "the transfer of the image 'house' onto being".¹² It is at this point that the question of poetry comes directly into view, not only in terms of the way it sheds light on the questions of being or of language, but in terms of its own nature, and the nature of poetic language, including its own relation to the topological. Moreover, if the poetic and the topological seem to be brought together here, then so it is not poetry alone – nor even poetry as tied to language – that is at issue. The inquiry into the place of language within the topology of being, with which the question of poetry is implicated, includes within it the question of topology itself. What, we may ask, is the nature of topology that language and poetry are so closely bound to it? – Or, to put a familiar Heideggerian remark and phrase into an interrogative form: what is the character of the saying of place that is involved in the topology of being, and what is the topology of being that it takes the form of "a poetry that thinks"?¹³

II. A mode of topological thinking, even if not made explicit, is present in Heidegger's thinking almost from the start. Yet although this means that Heidegger's thinking can be construed as fundamentally an attempt to think the essentially placed character of being, the nature of the placedness at issue here, and of place

itself, cannot simply be taken for granted. The famous 'question of being' is thus inseparable from the question of place – the response to both questions takes exactly the form of a *topology* – and yet the question of place itself brings with it further questions about the thinking that place demands, and also about those concepts with which place is most immediately associated, notably time and space. If the focus of Heidegger's early work often leads in the direction of the thinking of place through the thinking (and rethinking) of time, then much of the later work leads towards a rethinking of space or, perhaps better, of 'dimensionality', within a more direct and explicit thinking of place itself. Such a rethinking is especially important given the way in which the Western philosophical tradition, increasingly so within modernity, has tended to prioritize space over place, as it has also tended to prioritize the spatial over other concepts (which is why the critique of the 'Cartesian ontology of the world', essentially an ontology based in the idea of a homogenous and levelled-out mode of spatiality, is such an important element in the argument of *Being and Time*¹⁴).

The centrality of both place and space as questions is brought to particular clarity with the increasing focus in Heidegger's work, in the period after *Being and Time*, on truth as *aletheia* – unconcealment (*Unverborgenheit*) – and with this, on the associated concepts of the 'clearing' (*Lichtung*), the 'open' (*Offene*), and the 'between' (*Zwischen*), as well as on time-space (*Zeit-Raum*), and directly on place or locality itself (*Ort/Ortschaft*). Although the idea of language as the house of being occurs quite late, a topological conception of language nevertheless seems to be present, even if sometimes equivocally, from relatively early on in Heidegger's thinking – in the way, for instance, in which the character of language, and more fundamentally, of *logos*, is understood as a 'pointing out' of things in their being. Understood thus, language already seems to depend on a certain sort of placing, even as it is itself a form of placing or bringing near – and so any sort of speaking opens into a space in which that speaking takes place, even while such speaking itself depends on being already 'placed' as a condition of its possibility.

One might argue that all of these concepts, including the topological conception of language, the idea of truth as unconcealment,¹⁵ and even the notion of the 'event' that is so central to Heidegger's later thinking,¹⁶ can be seen as aspects of the 'there/here' (*Da*) that looms so large in *Being and Time*, and that remains in the later work, even if its occurrences there are less frequent – one might argue, in fact, that the reason the term *Da* appears less often in the later thinking is precisely because of the way that idea is taken up in the various forms of *topos* that appear there. Moreover, Heidegger's emerging concern, particularly under the influence of Hölderlin, with *earth* (*Boden, Erde*) and later sky (*Himmel*), a concern that reaches its full realisation in the idea of the Fourfold (*Das Geviert*), not only powerfully reinforces the topological orientation of Heidegger's thinking in general, but also does so in way that is focussed directly around the question of the poetic, and perhaps more immediately, the question of language.

III. As Heidegger so often emphasises (and Gadamer frequently reiterates), language is not to be understood as merely something that human beings 'possess'. Human being is linguistic – which is to say that it is pervaded by language, it is a being *in* language. As human being is tied to language, so language is also intimately tied to the possibility of world:

Language is not merely a tool which man possesses alongside many others; language first grants the possibility of standing in the midst of the openness of beings. Only where there is language, is there world, that is, the constantly changing cycle of decision and work, of action and responsibility, but also of arbitrariness and turmoil, decay and confusion. Only where world holds sway is there history. ... Language is ... the primal event [*Ereignis*] which disposes of the highest possibility of man's being.¹⁷

The openness of beings that is granted through language is not a matter of language creating or producing either an open domain for appearance or what comes to appearance within that domain. In this sense, not only is language not something 'possessed', but neither is language something that 'produces'. There is thus no sense in Heidegger of any form of linguistic 'constructionism' (or of any form of social constructionism either). Language grants openness, and in so doing language may also be said to be a form of 'freeing' or 'clearing' that allows beings to come forth *in their being* – that is, as the things they already are.

That language lets beings appear in their being does not mean that beings thereby come to presence in a way that is somehow 'complete' or 'transparent'. This would, in fact, be to misunderstand the very nature and possibility of what it is for something to come to presence – it would also be to forget Heidegger's constant insistence on the character of every revealing, every appearing, as belonging within the play of concealing/unconcealing that is truth as *aletheia*. Thus the appearing of beings is always such that they appear always with a certain cast or 'look' – this is the very nature of what it is to appear or to come to presence (and can be understood as tied to the character of any appearing as always situated or placed). Yet even though beings come to presence in particular ways, and so in different ways, they nevertheless come to presence as the beings they are. That we speak of things in different languages does not mean that there must be different things of which each language speaks. Indeed, the very nature of things is that they can indeed be spoken of differently – across utterances and across languages. In letting beings appear in their being, language thus lets beings appear, and yet does so in a way that does not curtail the inexhaustible possibilities in which the being of beings consists. For this reason, Heidegger can say of language that it "beckons us [*winkt uns*], at first and then again at the end, towards a thing's nature [*das Wesen einer Sache zu*]"¹⁸ – it draws us into nearness to beings without determining beings in that nearness.

So long as we remain with a conception of language that takes language as merely another 'natural' phenomenon that occurs within the world – as part of the

'natural history', as it were, of the human species (and so also as a phenomenon continuous with forms of animal communication) – then we will fail to penetrate the essence of language that is at issue here. What concerns us is not language as a natural or biological phenomenon, but language *as ontological*. If we often fail to recognise this, the reason is partly to be found in the nature of language itself. Precisely because language is so pervasive and so fundamental, so language tends to withdraw in the face of that which it lets come to presence. It is thus easy to overlook the linguisticity of human being, and instead to see the human as more fundamentally grounded in what is pre- or non-linguistic – in the 'pragmatic' engagement with things, for instance, in the bodily or 'experiential'. In this way we seem to see 'through' language, not in the sense that it is the means by which we see (for that would be to treat it as some medium between us and the world which it assuredly is not), but in the sense that we do *not* see it, and are indeed given to disregard it or to reduce it to its ordinary and specific instances, whether as speech or text or as formalised semantic and syntactic structure.

As it is a letting of beings appear in their being, so the granting of the openness of beings in and through language is a letting of beings into their 'own', into what is proper to them, but as such it is also into a letting of beings into their proper 'relation' with one another – both as together and apart. The granting of openness is thus a granting of both difference *and* sameness. This is the real character of the openness that is at issue here – and why it is indeed *a freeing* and *a clearing* – and why it also implicates things and world, as well as human beings (in their singularity and communality) and things. In the last of the passages quoted above, language is said to be "the primal event [*Ereignis*] which disposes of the highest possibility of man's being". The German term *Ereignis* – the event – carries within it a sense of 'what is proper to', or what is often rendered into English as 'appropriation' (giving rise to the sometime translation of *Ereignis* as 'event of appropriation').¹⁹

The idea of language as that which lets beings appear in their being, and so in terms of that which is indeed proper to them, in their difference and their sameness, thus already indicates a connection between language and the notion of the event as 'appropriative', as that which lets beings into what is proper to them. Consequently, Heidegger writes of the event:

The event of appropriation is that realm [*Bereich*], vibrating within itself, through which man and being reach each other in their nature... to think of the event as the event of appropriation [*Das Ereignis als Er-ignis denken*] means to shape the structure of the event as this self-vibrating realm. Thinking receives the materials for this self-suspended structure from language. For language is the most delicate and thus the most suspended vibration holding everything within the suspended structure of the appropriation. We dwell in the event inasmuch as our active nature is given over to language [translation modified].²⁰

The topological characterisation of the event that is evident in this passage (the event as 'realm', as that 'through which man and being reach'), and that is also evident elsewhere in Heidegger's thinking on the matter, should not be overlooked, yet just as important is the way in which the topology at work here also encompasses language. Language and the event are once again seen as belonging together, yet in two different ways: not only does language "hold everything within ...the event", but we are said to "dwell in" (*wohnen ...in*) in the event inasmuch as we are given over to language. Here one might say that it is the event that appears as "that which gives home to human being" (to use the language of the *Letter on Humanism*) rather than language, except that the very distinction between language, or the essence of language, and the event seems not to be such as to allow one to exclude the other. To use a form of words Heidegger uses elsewhere, language, or the being of language, and the event now appear as 'the same'.

IV. The same topology, the same connection between dwelling, the event, and language, recurs throughout many of Heidegger's later essays – including, of course, the *Letter on Humanism*, in which it is language that provides a dwelling place for human being, just as language is also the house of being. Within this topology, the possibility of appearing, the possibility that beings can come to presence in their being, is seen as dependent upon or occurring within a certain mode of dimensionality which in Heidegger's earlier thinking is most often referred to as the open or the between, sometimes in terms of nearness (*Nähe*), but in the later thinking is sometimes also referred to in terms simply of the dimension [*Dimension*] or dimensionality. In the *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger talks of being itself as this very dimension, writing that "...in the determination of the humanity of the human being as ek-sistence what is essential is not the human being but being – as the dimension of the ek-stasis [*als die Dimension des Ekstatischen der Ek-sistenz*]." ²¹ The talk of being as dimensionality occurs together with the assertion of language as the house of being. The dimension that appears is not, as Heidegger is at pains to stress here and in similar passages, anything spatial in the usual sense, although it is a dimensionality that frequently appears in contexts in which it might be thought to have spatial connotations in some sense or other. It is a dimensionality that appears most clearly perhaps in the dimension that is opened up between earth and sky – the dimensionality that belongs, one might say, to world, and also to place – that Heidegger elaborates upon in '*...Poetically Man Dwells ...*' (1951):

The upward glance passes aloft toward the sky, and yet it remains below on the earth. The upward glance spans the between of earth and sky. This between is measured out for the dwelling of man [*dem Wohnen des Menschen zugemessen.*]. We now call the span thus meted out the dimension [*die Dimension*]. This dimension does not arise from the fact that earth and sky are turned toward one another. Rather, their facing each other depends on the dimension. Nor is the dimension a stretch of space as ordinarily understood; for everything spatial, as something for

which space is made, is already in need of the dimension, that is, into which it is admitted. The nature of the dimension is the meting out – which is lightened and so can be spanned – of the between: the upward to the sky and the downward to the earth. We leave the nature of the dimension without a name.²²

Significantly, Heidegger once again refers to the dimension that is invoked here as that which allows for *dwelling* – dwelling depends, Heidegger tells us a few lines later, "on an upward-looking measure-taking of the dimension, in which sky belongs just as much as earth".²³ The 'measure-taking' is also a spanning of the dimension between earth and sky, and as such, it depends on a taking measure of that dimension into which human being is gathered and in which it belongs (in and to which it is 'appropriated').²⁴

If Heidegger does not refer directly to language at the same time as he talks of 'measure-taking', this is not because language and measure-taking stand apart from one another. The measure-taking on which dwelling depends is *poetry* (poetry is that which *builds* dwelling and it does so by *taking-measure*²⁵), and the essence of language is, as we have already seen, to be found in poetry. Consequently, if poetry is a measure-taking, then such measure-taking must also belong to language – or perhaps we should say that the measure-taking in which poetry consists stands in an essential relation to the character of language as precisely that which allows us into the dimension of being – that 'beckons' us towards that dimension.

In a later essay ('The Nature of Language', 1957/58 – from *On the Way to Language*), Heidegger is explicit in drawing attention to the way the being of language, 'saying' [*Sagen*] and 'nearness' belong together – such nearness, moreover, is given in the encounter between the regions of world (earth and sky, gods and mortals) that occurs in the Fourfold:

Anticipating, we defined Saying. To say means to show, to make appear, the lighting-concealing-releasing offer of world. Now, nearness manifests itself as the

motion in which the world's regions face each other. There arises the possibility of seeing how Saying, as the being of language, swings back into the presence of nearness. Quiet consideration makes possible an insight into how nearness and Saying, being of the persisting nature of language, are the Same. Language, then, is not a mere human faculty. Its character belongs to the very character of the movement of the face-to face encounter of the world's four regions. There arises the possibility that we undergo an experience with language, that we enter into something which bowls us over, that is, transmutes our relation to language. How so? Language, Saying of the world's fourfold, is no longer only such that we speaking human beings are related to it in the sense of a nexus existing between man and language. Language is, as world-moving Saying, the relation of all relations. It relates, maintains, proffers, and enriches the face-to-face encounter of the world's regions, holds and keeps them, in that it holds itself-Saying-in reserve.²⁶

And elsewhere, in 'Hebel – Friend of the House' (1957), Heidegger writes:

A word of language sounds and resounds in the voice, is clear and bright in the typeface. Voice and script are indeed sensuous, yet always within them a meaning is told and appears. As sensuous meaning, the word traverses the expanse of the leeway between earth and sky. Language holds open the realm in which man, upon the earth and beneath the sky, inhabits the house of the world.²⁷

Here language appears explicitly as that which grants openness – which lets things into their proper relation with one another – but as this occurs in relation to the elements of the Fourfold itself, especially in relation to earth and sky, and so "holds open" the realm of human dwelling. Moreover, this relating and opening, which, as we saw earlier, encompasses both sameness and difference, does indeed seem to imply a dimensionality that belongs to relating and opening as such – a

dimensionality that is surely the same as that to which Heidegger refers in the 'Letter on "Humanism"' and in '...Poetically Man Dwells...'. It is the role of language as that which grants the openness for such dimensionality, which can be understood as itself a form of dimensionality, that grounds the characterization of language as the house of being.

The way language and dimensionality are brought together in the later Heidegger, in these passages and others, is directly connected with the character of language as both opening and relating. Opening is an opening of the dimensional – it is a clearing, a making-room, even, one might say, a *spacing*. Relationality requires such dimensionality, since relationality only arises between what appears together and yet also apart.²⁸ Dimensionality in turn, however, also requires relationality – there is no opening up into an unlimited, horizonless realm, but always and only into the realm of the between. The dimensional is this very realm – as is the relational also. For this reason, one might say here that the dimensional and the relational are not separate, but are rather two sides of the same – both arise out of the between, or as one might also say, out of the bounded open that is place (as open it can also be said to be boundless, but as such, it is a boundlessness that belongs always and only together with the bounded²⁹). It is thus that the language of the house, and the home, recur so often in Heidegger's discussions of these matters – what the house provides is a delimited realm that, precisely though its delimitation, gives room to things, allows them leeway, grants them a place. The house provides a dimension within which things come into their own, which also means come into the world, and this is precisely why language can be said to be the house of being. Language is thus dimensional and relational – and if it is, as Heidegger claims, "the relation of all relations",³⁰ then perhaps it should also be said to be the 'dimension of all dimensions'.

As language belongs together with the event, so what is said of language can be said of the event too – as appropriative, and so as letting things into their proper relation as both different and the same, the event is both relational and dimensional.

What the connection to the event also shows, however, is that the neither the relationality nor the dimensionality at issue here can be a matter of the simple standing of one thing over against and apart from another.³¹ Heidegger talks of the glance as 'spanning' the between, of the 'turning' of the regions of world, of saying as 'world-moving', of the word as 'traversing' the leeway between earth and sky. The relationality and dimensionality that concerns Heidegger – nearness, the between, the open, the clearing – is thus the relationality and dimensionality that is also tied inextricably to activity and to movement. The event draws together this sense of the active and mobile with the relational and dimensional – hence the description of the event in *Identity and Difference* as the "self-vibrating realm", and of language as "the most delicate and thus the most suspended vibration holding everything within" the realm that is the event. Thus we can say that the event is the happening of dimensionality and of relationality – and this happening is the happening of language. In the 'Letter on "Humanism"', Heidegger comments that:

The one thing thinking would like to attain and for the first time tries to articulate in *Being and Time* is something simple. As such, being remains mysterious, the simple nearness of an unobtrusive prevailing. The nearness occurs essentially as language itself.³²

One might add that language, in its own turn, occurs as this same nearness – and it is thus that it is the very house of being, that in whose home human beings dwell. In this way, Language appears as itself a *place*, a *topos*, and as that which grants such a place – which is why topology can indeed be understood as a 'saying' of the place of being. Moreover, topology here names both *the saying of place that occurs in thought and in poetry* (in 'the poetry that thinks') and *the giving of place to being that occurs in and through the belonging together of saying and being as such*.

V. If language is dimensional, if it is relational, then why is it not also *spatial*? Certainly that seems to be the implicit direction in which much of this discussion leads. As we saw earlier, however, although Heidegger recognises that a sense of spatiality seems to be invoked in talk, for instance, of the dimension, he also insists that what is at issue is nothing spatial, or at least, nothing spatial "as ordinarily understood".³³ In the passage in which this is addressed in the 'Letter on "Humanism"', Heidegger comments that "the dimension is not something spatial in the familiar sense. Rather, everything spatial and all time-space occur essentially in the dimensionality [*im Dimensionalen*] that being itself is."³⁴ Dimensionality and spatiality are here distinguished in a way that, on the face of it, seems peculiar – after all, what is dimensionality if it is not spatial? One cannot answer that the dimensionality at issue is temporal rather than spatial, since not only is there an obvious question as to whether this would not simply involve treating the temporal as itself implicitly spatial (the problem, after all, is that dimensionality seems to bring spatiality with it), but it seems to ignore the fact that what seems to be indicated here, even if not made explicit, is that it is not only the spatial that occurs in the dimension, but also the temporal (thus one might say, analogously, that the event character of the event is 'not something temporal in the familiar sense'). Moreover, if it is indeed the case that dimension is not to be construed as spatial 'in the familiar sense', then surely the same ought to be said of the dimension *as dimensional*, especially since 'in its familiar sense', the dimension *is* spatial – indeed, one might argue that to claim that the dimension is not spatial 'in the familiar sense' is thereby also to claim that it is not dimensional 'in the familiar sense'.

In fact, what almost certainly lies behind Heidegger's refusal of a spatial understanding of the dimension is, first and foremost, the desire to rule out any notion of the dimension as associated with space "construed physically-technologically" – with the idea of space "that was first determined by Galileo and Newton" and that consists in the idea of a "homogenous separation that that is not distinct in any of its possible places, that is equivalent in all direction, but not

sensibly perceptible".³⁵ The passage from the 'Letter on "Humanism"', however, might be thought to make for complications here, since although Heidegger there refers to the dimension as indeed "not something spatial in the familiar sense", he also says that "everything spatial and all time-space" occur in the dimensionality of being, and in a note appended to the phrase "everything spatial" adds "Space neither alongside time, nor dissolved into time, nor deduced from time".³⁶ Moreover, his comments in the 'Letter on "Humanism"' are echoed in the discussion of the dimension in '...Poetically Man Dwells...': "everything spatial, as something for which space is made, is already in need of the dimension, that is, into which it is admitted".³⁷ This might be taken to imply that it is not only spatiality 'in the familiar sense' from which the dimensionality at issue is marked off, but from all and every sense of spatiality.

Whether or not it is Heidegger's intention, in the passages in question, to exclude every sense of spatiality from the dimension, such an attempt to exclude the spatial completely would raise problems in those passages itself (since it seems at odds with the qualifications 'as ordinarily understood' and 'in the familiar sense'), but it would also be at odds with the way Heidegger later treats spatiality as amenable to a reading that does indeed seem to be very close to the way he also treats of dimensionality. Immediately prior to his assertion of the belonging-together of saying and nearness 'The Nature of Language', Heidegger considers the character of nearness itself, and in doing so is led directly to consider the nature of space, and with it time. Heidegger distinguishes between time and space "conceived as parameters" (presumably what underpins the 'ordinary' or 'familiar' sense of both terms) and the "timing and spacing" that "moves the encounter of the four world regions" and to which the character of language is itself bound.³⁸ In 'Art and Space' (the source for the characterisation of space in its Galilean-Newtonian sense quoted above), from 1969,³⁹ the focus is primarily on space (time does not appear in this discussion except inasmuch as there is an emphasis on activity), but the movement of thought is very similar. Heidegger first identifies what we may think of as the

ordinary or familiar sense of space in its "physical-technological" construal, but then asks whether this must count as "the only true space", and more importantly, how we can find "what is peculiar to space". In response to the latter question, Heidegger writes:

There is an emergency bridge, one that is narrow and swaying. We attempt to listen to language. Whereof does it speak in the word 'space' [*Raum*]? Clearing-away [*Räumen*] speaks in it. This means: to clear out [*roden*], to make the wilderness open. Clearing-away brings forth what is free, the open for humans' settling and dwelling.⁴⁰

Here, and in the discussion that follows, Heidegger follows the clues given by language toward a thinking of space that is more fundamental than that given in space as "physical-technological", and that does indeed seem to converge with his thinking of nearness and of the dimension.

Perhaps significantly, the language of the dimension, in particular, is absent from 'Art and Space', as it is also absent from 'The Nature of Language'. In the latter, it seems to have been replaced by the talk of nearness and the 'face-to face encounter' of the Fourfold; in the former, it appears to have given way to a rethought conception of the spatial as grounded in clearing-away which is itself understood in terms of "making-space" [*Einräumen*] and then again as "granting and arranging" [*Einrichtens*]:

On the one hand, making-space admits something. It lets what is open hold sway, which among other things grants the appearance of present things to which human dwelling sees itself consigned. On the other hand, making-space prepares for things the possibility of belonging to their respective whither, and out of this, to each other.⁴¹

The way in which Heidegger here talks of making-space – which Heidegger also goes on to connect directly to place in a way that is highly significant⁴² – understood as at the heart of space and the spatial, seems to parallel the way in which he elsewhere talks of language or of saying. Indeed, in thinking of language as the house of being we are already thinking of language as a making-room in the sense Heidegger employs in 'Art and Space'. Understanding each in terms, not of what is 'usual' or 'familiar', but in terms of what is proper to it, in terms of the essential and originary, then language and space appear as belonging closely together. Language, saying, is indeed making-space, *spacing*, but so too, perhaps, must space, making-space, be understood *as saying*. Although the latter idea is not explored in 'Art and Space', it nevertheless seems to be a conclusion to which we are inevitably drawn – it is precisely what seems to emerge from out of Heidegger's previous reflections on language in which space is already at issue, even if sometimes obscurely so. To think language topologically, then, is not only to allow the relation between language and place to emerge, but also to attend to the very spatiality of language itself – a spatiality that is nevertheless always bound to place.

VI. The consideration of space and the spatial is instructive for the way it illuminates the character of both space and language, as well as their relation to the dimension and to nearness – and so, also of course, to place. In addition, however, it brings directly into view the issue of the meaning of the terms that are at work here, and so also the nature of the thinking in which Heidegger is engaged. It is commonplace, especially among English-speaking readers, to treat the later Heidegger as having moved away from philosophy towards poetry, and his topological approach to language, as well as the vocabulary and style of that approach, may be thought to confirm this – what is the talk of language as 'the house of being' or as 'nearness' if it is not poetic or an attempt to engage in a form of poetic expression? Moreover, if such thinking does indeed move in the direction of the poetic, then surely this also means that what is at work here is a mode of thinking that, like poetry itself,

operates primarily within the realm of the metaphorical. The reaction of many readers of Heidegger's later thinking for whom the 'poetic' character of that thinking is seen as a barrier to any properly philosophical engagement is undoubtedly based in just such a reading. Thus one can easily conclude, as is so often claimed, that the later Heidegger gives up on philosophy, and instead lapses or 'drifts' into poetry and mysticism.

Commonplace though this reaction is, it nevertheless represents a serious misreading of the later thought, and indeed of the development of Heidegger's thinking overall. There can be no doubt that Heidegger is critical of traditional philosophy, can be said to have abandoned it, and so to have proclaimed the 'end' of philosophy. Yet what is abandoned is indeed a traditional mode of philosophising – rather than, necessarily, philosophy as such. It might even be said that, on one possible reading, what Heidegger intends, in his very focus on the end of philosophy as such, is itself a move back towards philosophy – towards that which lies at the origin of philosophy, since the end is also the beginning⁴³ – rather than a move away from it. The question of philosophy aside, however, it is clear that the poetic shift in Heidegger's thinking is no mere accident, nor is it only stylistic. It arises, instead, out of the very nature of that thinking, and is integral to it; moreover it is also not a shift towards a metaphorical mode of expression, but is rather an attempt to return to a more primordial mode of speaking, one that is attuned to the very place of speaking, of thinking, of being.

In the *Letter on 'Humanism'*, referring back to his early work as well as to ideas in the *Letter* itself, Heidegger writes that:

The reference in *Being and Time* (H54) to 'being-in' as 'dwelling' is no mere etymological play. The same reference in the 1936 essay on Hölderlin's word, 'Full of merit, yet poetically, man dwells upon this earth,' is not the adornment of a thinking that rescues itself from science by means of poetry. The talk about the house of being is not the transfer [*Übertragung*] of the image 'house' onto being...⁴⁴

It is immediately following this passage that Heidegger adds "but one day we will, by thinking the essence of being in a way appropriate to its matter, more readily be able to think what 'house' and 'dwelling' are."⁴⁵ Heidegger is emphatic that the 'poetic' language at work here is not to be dismissed as mere 'play' or 'adornment' nor is it to be treated as involving the transfer of an image (as the etymology of the 'metaphoric' might be taken to imply). Elsewhere Heidegger explicitly attacks the metaphorical itself. It serves, he says, "as a handy crutch in the interpretation of works of poetry and of artistic production in general... [that] ... exists only within metaphysics", urging us to be wary "that we don't precipitously take the talk of thinking as a listening and a bringing into view to be mere metaphors and thus take them too lightly."⁴⁶ Yet although it is quite clear that Heidegger rejects metaphor, it is equally clear that this involves no rejection of poetry. Indeed, Heidegger's rejection of metaphor occurs in just those passages in which the issue of poetic language, and Heidegger's own use of such language, is to the fore – it occurs, one might say, as part of Heidegger's defence of poetry.⁴⁷ It would seem that the obvious conclusion to be drawn is that, as Heidegger sees it, poetic language, and so too the language of genuine thinking, is not itself to be construed as based in the metaphoric.⁴⁸

If we take this conclusion seriously, then it has important implications for our reading of the topological in Heidegger.⁴⁹ The language of place – and of space as well – which means the language of the dimension, nearness, the open, the between, house, dwelling, earth, sky, even of the event – cannot be treated, if they ever were, as merely metaphors, thereby allowing us effectively to set them aside and turn our thinking to something else – whether because the metaphor is seen as philosophically irrelevant (so the metaphor becomes the marker for what we can ignore), or because the metaphor is philosophically essential *as metaphor* (and so in its character as always a carrying across or a pointing beyond). Instead we must attend to place and to space – to dimension, nearness, the open, the between, house, dwelling, earth, sky, the event – as they are in their own character, which is to say, *in*

their being. This is the very point that is contained in the remark in the 'Letter on "Humanism"' that "one day we will, by thinking the essence of being in a way appropriate to its matter, more readily be able to think what 'house' and 'dwelling' are".⁵⁰ Heidegger's claim here is that it is by thinking *being* that we will come to understand *house* and *dwelling* – which might be thought strange, as if we have to think through being in order to get to the thinking of house and dwelling, except that it simply restates Heidegger's familiar claim that all genuine thinking is a thinking *of being* – which can now be seen to itself carry with it the refusal of metaphor, since metaphor is construed as something precisely other than this.

Here we see why metaphor and metaphysics are so much bound together – both are forms, perhaps, one might say, the *same* form, of *forgetting*. Not only is metaphor metaphysical, then, but one might say that metaphysics is itself metaphorical: it is, in the language of the ontological difference, a crossing over of the ontological difference in which that difference is also effaced; it is a movement away from being towards beings; it is also, in the language of the topological, a movement away from place that is essentially displacing and disorienting. In this latter sense, one might say that in both the metaphor and in metaphysics we lose sight of the place in which we nevertheless always remain.

VII. If Heidegger's language, and especially the language of topology, is not to be construed metaphorically, and explicitly so, then one might suppose that such language must instead be understood, in some sense, *literally*. Not only is the literal that which is not metaphorical, but what is at issue in, for instance, Heidegger's talk of 'house' and 'dwelling' is the question of what dwelling and house themselves *are*, and this is surely just the question of the literal meaning of the terms at issue here, their 'first' meaning, as it were⁵¹ (although once the notion of the literal is deployed in this manner, the question then arises as to just how the literal itself should be understood – a question that is, however, all too seldom even considered). Such an approach might be taken to involve a significant reversal of the usual understanding

of the idea of the poetic: rather than being given over to the metaphoric and the 'non-literal', it may well be taken as more properly literal, and so more properly 'first', than language in any of its other forms (including, for instance, that of the 'scientific').

Yet it might also be thought that the very notion of the literal is itself problematic in this context (even if it can be applied elsewhere) no less than is the metaphorical. The literal is surely the prosaic, the ordinary, the familiar, and yet the mode of speaking that is at issue here is quite other than prosaic, other than ordinary, other than familiar. The literal is often taken to bring with it a sense of speech as constrained and univocal – as determinate and without ambiguity (which is, one might say part of, of seems to be at issue in the contrast with the metaphoric – the latter being taken as a form of polysemy or equivocity and the former of monosemy or univocity), whereas poetic speaking, the speaking in which Heidegger is engaged, while not lacking in lucidity, surely brings with it an excess that goes beyond any narrow constraint of meaning.⁵² Moreover, one might well argue that what is at issue here is a mode of speaking that is the origin for all and any speaking whatsoever, and so comes before any possible distinction between the metaphorical and the literal.⁵³

There is something right about this, but also something mistaken. The originary saying of being, which is an event given to human beings and to which they are already given over, is indeed neither literal nor metaphorical, and Heidegger makes no claims about either metaphoricity or literality in relation that event. Such speaking is a form of poetic speaking – poetic speaking in its most original form as *poiesis* – but it is the speaking of language, which can be heard in poetry (and indeed in all language), and yet which is not itself spoken by the poet or the thinker. It is the speaking in which language speaks the human, not the language in which the human speaks. Instead, what is at issue in the discussion of metaphor in Heidegger is the manner in which that form of poetic speaking that is indeed undertaken by poet and thinker is itself to be understood – the form of speaking

exemplified in Hölderlin's poetry, in Heidegger's own thinking, and in any genuine attempt to address the question of being, of language, or of place. It is here, *and only here*, that the issue of metaphoricity arises – can arise even as a question (it cannot be a question for the speaking that belongs to language as such) – and so also here, and only here, that any question of literality arises either.

The distinction between the metaphoric and the literal (and so too the notions themselves) plays no significant role in Heidegger's thinking more broadly – thus Heidegger offers no substantive theory of the working of metaphor or of the relation between metaphoricity and literality. This also means that the distinction can be seen as a purely correlative one – what appears as literal in one context may be metaphorical in another (the same is true of the distinction between 'dead' and 'live' metaphor) – and so concerns two different ways of understanding language, two different interpretative approaches, rather than two substantively different modes of meaning or, indeed, of linguistic being.⁵⁴ Moreover, Heidegger's rejection of any metaphorical reading of the poetic does not imply that the poetic is therefore given over to a simple univocity or determinacy – which also means that if Heidegger's language is to be construed 'literally' rather than metaphorically, then the sense of literality at stake similarly cannot be such as to imply univocity or determinacy either. Here we should understand the sense of literality at issue as one that demands our attentiveness to language itself – understanding the literal in something like its original sense as that which concerns the letter or the word – and so the focus on literality can be seen as a way of remaining true to Heidegger's own insistence, for instance, in 'Art and Space', that we must listen *to language*,⁵⁵ and we must do so even in our own speaking.

What comes to the fore here is a mode of speaking that is not metaphorical, and yet retains an essential vibrancy – what I have sometimes referred to as an *iridescence*⁵⁶ – that belongs to language as such (to language, one might say, as that "most delicate and ... most suspended vibration"). Such vibrancy is not the same as mere ambiguity, nor does it stand as a mode of equivocity that remains merely

within the contrast established by the pairing of equivocity with univocity. In the lectures on Hölderlin's *Remembrance*, Heidegger remarks that "So long as we remain within the language of 'univocity' [*Eindeutigkeit*] and 'equivocity' [*Vieldeutigkeit*] we grasp the word after the standards of 'logic'. But in truth any real word has its hidden and wide spaces of vibration".⁵⁷ Clearly, the vibrancy that Heidegger asserts as belonging to every word can itself be viewed as a form of equivocity or polysemy – of *Vieldeutigkeit* – and so this comment does not represent a rejection of the equivocal or polysemous as such. Rather, it can indeed be seen as an assertion of its primacy, and such a reading is confirmed by Heidegger's treatment of *Vieldeutigkeit* elsewhere in the later thinking.⁵⁸ Heidegger's rejection of metaphor thus goes hand-in-hand with his assertion of the essential vibrancy of language.⁵⁹ Yet this vibrancy, as is evident from Heidegger's characterisation of the event itself, does not belong only to language. It is a vibrancy that belongs to the event and to being, to nearness and the dimension – a vibrancy that belongs to the word *and* to thing. "It is enough here to consider just this", Heidegger says in the lectures on Hölderlin's *Remembrance*, "'things themselves', before any so-called 'symbols', are already poetized".⁶⁰ This is why the metaphorical has no role here, and also why we may decide to draw on a certain conception of the literal⁶¹ – because poetry is already given in the thing itself, as it is given in the event, in being, in the original and originary saying of language by which the thing is called forth, by which it is let into the open, by which it is placed.⁶²

VIII. Heidegger's rejection of metaphor might also appear to involve the rejection of the image. Certainly, image and metaphor are themselves often viewed as belonging together.⁶³ Yet there is surely a sense in which the image extends more widely than the metaphor alone. So when Heidegger presents us with the phrase 'the house of being', even if he does not present us with a metaphor, what he seems to present us with is an image, even if the nature and status of that image can be put in question. In the brief passage quoted near the beginning of this discussion, Bachelard speaks

of the 'house image' and his own investigation of the house is framed within an inquiry into poetry and the poetic image – poetry being essentially concerned with the image.⁶⁴ The relation between metaphor and image, and between image and poetry, is thus one that remains to be clarified.

It may be thought, however, that the matter is clear enough already. In the 'Letter on "Humanism"', for instance, Heidegger denies that there is any transfer of the image 'house' onto being.⁶⁵ In the *Ister* lectures he insists that "the rivers in Hölderlin's poetry are... in no way symbolic images that are merely more difficult to interpret in terms of degree", since "if that were the case, they would still remain essentially 'symbolic images'. Yet this is precisely what they are not".⁶⁶ Similarly, in the lectures on Hölderlin's *Remembrance*, Heidegger comments that: "the masterkey of all poetics, the doctrine of image and metaphor, in the realm of Hölderlin's hymnal poetry, opens not a single door and brings us in no way into the open".⁶⁷ It would be easy to suppose that Heidegger does indeed treat the metaphor and the image together, rejecting both. Yet the passages, like these, in which Heidegger is critical of images, and the language of images (which is what we might suppose poetic language to consist in), typically involve the image only under a particular construal. So, in the *Ister* passage, it is the *symbolic* image that is rejected; in the *Remembrance* discussion, it is the image as tied to metaphor, but also once again, to *symbol* (and so to the idea of that which refers to something else, namely, a world beyond or behind – *Hinterwelten*);⁶⁸ and in the 'Letter on "Humanism"' the *transfer* of the image (which may be thought already to be implied in the idea of the symbolic).

What is at issue here so far as the image is concerned is thus the image as tied to a movement beyond and away the thing – and so to the image construed *as symbolic*. It is thus that in the *Remembrance* lectures Heidegger concludes his discussion of image, symbol, and metaphor with the remark already quoted above that "it is enough here to consider just this: 'things themselves', before any so-called 'symbols', are already poetized".⁶⁹ What then, of the image construed, not as symbol, but *as thing*, or as belonging *with* the thing? The association of the poetic

with the image ought to provoke a question concerning the image in the poetic, and in fact, Heidegger himself raises such a question, and does so in a way that does not imply the rejection of the image as such. In 'The Nature of Language' he asks:

What, really, does "figurative talk" [*bildliche Redewiese*] mean? We are quick to give the answer here, never giving it a thought that we cannot claim to have a reliable formulation so long as it remains unclear what is talk and what is imagery [*was Rede ist und was Bild*], and in what way language speaks in images, if indeed language does speak so at all.⁷⁰

The figurative, which in the German is quite explicitly 'of the image' (*bildlich*) or, as we might say, 'imagistic', is itself usually taken to stand in contrast with the literal, but here that contrast also appears to be questionable – at least inasmuch as figurative talk is indeed imagistic, and inasmuch as it remains unclear to what extent the image is indeed distinct from the symbol or may instead be said to belong with the thing. In '...Poetically Man Dwells...' Heidegger takes up the idea of the image, not as something symbolic or as transferred, but as connected to the very possibility of appearing – appearing as the coming into the realm of the visible:

Our current name for the sight and appearance of something is 'image'. The nature of the image is to let something be seen. By contrast, copies and imitations are already mere variations on the genuine image which, as a sight or spectacle, lets the invisible be seen and so imagines the invisible in something alien to it. Because poetry takes that mysterious measure, to wit, in the face of the sky, therefore, it speaks in 'images'. This is why poetic images are imaginings in a distinctive sense: not mere fancies and illusions but imaginings that are visible inclusions of the alien in the sight of the familiar. The poetic saying of images gathers the brightness and sound of the heavenly appearances into one with the

darkness and silence of what is alien. By such sights the god surprises us. In this strangeness he proclaims his unfaltering nearness.⁷¹

Poetry, Heidegger says, speaks *in images*, but presumably this does not mean that it necessarily speaks *in metaphors*. The image and the metaphor appear, on this account, to be distinct – the metaphorical is figurative, but the figurative is not always metaphorical, nor is it straightforwardly to be opposed to the literal. If one conceived of the metaphor differently – not as essentially a transfer or symbol, but as itself an image understood as a genuine appearance – then the way would be open for a rethinking of the connection between the metaphorical and the figurative, between metaphor and poetry, and between metaphor and thinking.⁷² Whether one can argue that there is such a possibility implicit in Heidegger's approach,⁷³ it is nevertheless not the path Heidegger himself adopts. Metaphor is thus rejected, but the image as distinct from the symbol, and the character of the poetic as oriented to such images, seems to be affirmed.

The discussion of the image, then, while it may initially seem like something of a detour, actually turns us back towards what is central. Indeed, one might argue that the entire mode of thinking that is instantiated in Heidegger's later work is essentially oriented to the image – even that it occurs *in images*.⁷⁴ Yet this focus on the image means something very specific: it is a mode of *seeing* that remains with things, allows things to appear, allows them to come into the open. The image that is at issue here is thus not the image as representation, not the image as symbol, not the image as it might be thought to operate in the metaphor understood as a form of transference, not the image as contrasted with that which is literal. Instead the image itself gathers, and if we take note of the way such gathering can be said to house and to place, perhaps we might even say that the image can be a home *for thinking*. Something of this is surely at work in Bachelard's thinking for whom the investigation of the house is itself an investigation of the image, and in whose work the image itself houses as much as does the house itself. Moreover, for Bachelard the

image has nothing of the character of the metaphoric as the latter notion appears in Heidegger. Instead Bachelard claims that, in the engagement with poetry, "[we] are asked to consider an image not as an object and even less as the substitute for an object, but to seize its specific reality".⁷⁵ Moreover, it is precisely in virtue of its relation to the image that Bachelard declares poetry to be the origin of language;⁷⁶ the image possesses a dynamic and active character – it "reverberates" – like that which Heidegger attributes to language; and it is through the sonority of the image that the poet is said to speak "on the threshold of being".⁷⁷

Heidegger says that the reason poetry speaks in images is "because poetry takes that mysterious measure, to wit, in the face of the sky". The taking of measure is, as we have already seen, directly tied to the dimension, to the opening of the Fourfold – it is a spacing and a placing – or, perhaps better, an entering into that spacing and placing, a gathering and a saying. The taking of measure does not address itself to what lies beyond, even though it does gather what is alien as well as what is familiar. But the place of this gathering is the very place of our own being as well as of the things that are gathered around us and in which the Fourfold is itself gathered. The character of Heidegger's thinking, of poetic thinking, as a thinking in images thus also returns us to the character of that thinking as a thinking of place. It is thus that the poetry that thinks can indeed be said to be the saying of the place of being, to be, in truth, the topology of being.

VII. Gadamer draws attention to the way in which Heidegger pushed against the constraints of traditional philosophical language in trying to find a vocabulary adequate to the direction in which his thinking was headed – and he also draws attention to Hölderlin as playing a crucial role in the attempt to find such a vocabulary. Referring to the essays contained in his book *Heidegger's Ways*, Gadamer remarks that there he tried "to make it clear that the use of language in the later Heidegger does not represent a drifting off into poetry, but rather is situated completely in tune with the thinking which led him into a whole new line of

questioning".⁷⁸ Here Gadamer is not concerned to deny the poetic character of the later thinking, but rather to argue against its treatment as merely a contingent affectation, and to emphasise instead its character as a direct and necessary outcome of the radicalization of Heidegger's thinking in the period after *Being and Time*. The aim of the inquiry undertaken here has been to show that this radicalization is directly bound up with the turn towards topology – towards the saying of the place of being.

The turn towards place not only requires a different use of language – one that both draws upon and converges with the poetic – but it also brings language itself directly into question. To think the being of language is to think the being of place. Thus saying *is placing* just as placing itself *is saying*. It is the necessity and intimacy of this relation that forces thinking towards poetic saying – and it does so, not because poetry involves some rhapsodic movement beyond, but precisely of the way it remains *here*, with things, in the very openness of the world: "Poetry does not fly above and surmount the earth in order to escape it and hover over it. Poetry is what first brings man onto the earth, making him belong to it, and thus brings him into dwelling".⁷⁹ Poetry, one might say, has its own being in the saying of the place of being – both in the saying and in the saying that responds to that saying. It is thus no surprise that the thinking of place has so often been concentrated among poets – and we need not look only to Hölderlin in this regard. In English, in fact, it might seem as if the thinking of place has been the almost exclusive preserve of poets, of whom John Clare and William Wordsworth are only two of the best known examples.⁸⁰ Poetry is place-disclosing, and not only of particular places, but of place itself, and so of our own place, which is the place of being.

Yet what is also disclosed in poetry is language – poetry is indeed that which first makes language possible⁸¹ – and so in poetry the question of place and the question of language are shown as belonging together. The region of their belonging is topology, and what poetry both reveals and instantiates is the nature of language, *and* the nature of language *in its belonging to such a topology*. Significantly, however,

and in contrast to the language to which philosophy is often taken to aspire, the language at issue here is not the language of completion or finality. Poetry exhibits no such completion nor can it ever properly aspire to it. This might already be thought to follow from its inevitable polysemy – its iridescence, and the iridescence of things, as explored above – but it does not follow from this alone. Because poetry is *a saying*, it is irreducible simply to *something said*; as such, it does not consist in something that, in being said, is thereby completed or finalised, and so set behind us. The saying of the place of being that is "the poetry that thinks" is, as saying, something towards which we are constantly turned, something that always remains *before us*. Here we remain always 'on the way' just as we remain always 'on the way' to language (the two 'ways' are, in fact, one). What this means, however, is that the 'difficulty' of language that Gadamer identifies as leading Heidegger towards the language of poetry, and into the engagement with Hölderlin, is not a difficulty that poetry, or Hölderlin, could ever enable Heidegger to overcome. The 'difficulty' is one that belongs to language as such.

As language is the house of being, so language is itself the place of being, and thus the topology of being, which is the saying of the place of being, is also the saying of language. Moreover, saying and placing here appear as the same – one may say that this is partly what is captured in Heidegger's use of the term *Erörterung*, which can now be understood as precisely the placing that occurs in and through language, in and through which language is itself placed (exemplified in Heidegger's approach in 'Language in the Poem' in which *Erörterung* is directly thematized⁸²). In being 'on the way' to language, we are also, therefore, 'on the way' to the place that language is, which is to say that we are on the way *to place*. Indeed, in being 'on the way', we already find ourselves given over to place, for to be 'on the way' is already to be turned towards place – and more than this, to be turned towards place, even to be placed, is itself to be 'on the way'. Heidegger comments that "the place, the gathering power, gathers in and preserves all it has gathered, not like an encapsulating shell, but rather by penetrating with its light all it has gathered,

and only thus releasing it into its own nature".⁸³ Placing – place itself – is not some simple 'remaining within' that holds what is gathered in an already determined locatedness. Instead, it is a gathering and a turning, a constant movement towards, rather than a final coming to rest. The 'difficulty' of language that leads Heidegger towards poetry is thus not a difficulty that belongs to language alone, but is rather a 'difficulty' that belongs to language as placing, a 'difficulty' that belongs *to place*. As such, however, it is not a difficulty to be overcome; instead it is a difficulty that marks the continuing questionability of language and of place. It is this questionability that is opened up in the thinking of poetry, and to which poetic thinking also responds. In doing so, such thinking directs attention to its own place – to the place of saying and the saying of place – at the same time as it also heeds that place and the saying that belongs to it.

Notes and references

¹ The hermeneutical character of the early thinking is most strongly present in the 1923 lectures *Ontology – The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, and although the hermeneutical is also present in *Being and Time*, it is less directly thematized in the later work which has, in addition, a more strongly analytical orientation.

² See 'A Dialogue on Language', *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p.12.

³ On the topological character of Heidegger's thinking as a whole see my *Heidegger's Topology* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2006).

⁴ For more on their relation see my discussion in 'Place and Situation' in Jeff Malpas and Hans-Helmuth Gander (eds), *The Routledge Companion to Philosophical Hermeneutics* (London: Routledge, forthcoming, 2014); see also 'The Beginning of Understanding: Event, Place, Truth', in Jeff Malpas and Santiago Zabala (eds), *Consequences of Hermeneutics* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2010), pp.261-280.

⁵ See Stuart Elden, 'Heidegger's Hölderlin and the Importance of Place', *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 30 (1999): 258-274. Heidegger's increasing engagement with Hölderlin in the 'thirties is undoubtedly tied to his disengagement from Nazim, but at the same time, it involves him in attempting to rethink terms that were also at issue in that engagement – including the idea of the 'German' and of Germany. It is only as the war recedes in the late 'forties that Heidegger's thinking begins to grapple more directly and explicitly with the topological themes that had already emerged as explicit in the 'thirties, but which were often still addressed, at the earlier stage, in terms that invoked the nation and the people, and their role within a certain form of the history of being.

⁶ Heidegger, Martin (1998) 'Letter on "Humanism"', trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.239.

⁷ See 'Letter on "Humanism"', pp.257-258.

⁸ Heidegger lectured on Hölderlin's *The Rhine* and *Germania* in 1934-35 (*Gesamtausgabe* 39, ed. Susanne Zeigler Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1980) – 'Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry' which first appeared in 1936 (in *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, trans. Keith Hoeller, Amherst: Humanity Books, 2000, pp.51-66) is derived from these lectures. In 1939 Heidegger presented what later appeared as the essay on Hölderlin's *As when on holiday...* (in *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, pp.67-100). In 1941-42, he lectured on Hölderlin's *Remembrance* (*Hölderlin's Hymne 'Andenken'*, *Gesamtausgabe* 52, ed. C. Ochtwadt, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1982) – an essay derived from this appearing in 1943; in 1942-43, he lectured on Hölderlin's *The Ister* (*Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister'*, trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996); and in 1943 he gave a speech in Freiburg on Hölderlin's *Homecoming/To Kindred Ones* to mark the centenary of Hölderlin's death (*Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, pp.23-50). Heidegger was, of course, familiar with Hölderlin long before the lectures of the 1930s, having been an avid reader of the poet in his schooldays (see Heidegger,

Frühe Schriften, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, *Gesamtausgabe* Vol. 1, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1978, pp. 57-59), and finding a renewed enthusiasm for him during his period of military service in the last years of the First World War.

⁹ In English translation as *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper and Row, 1971). A number of the essays from *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1954 – *Gesamtausgabe* Vol. 12, Frankfurt-am-Main: Klostermann, 1985) also testify to Heidegger's ongoing engagement with Hölderlin – especially notable in this regard is '...Poetically Man Dwells...' (in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter, New York: Harper and Row, 1975, pp.211-229) in which the idea of 'the house of being' is taken up in slightly different terms from those at work in the 'Letter on Humanism'. Hölderlin is also the focus for Heidegger's thinking in 'Hölderlin's Heaven and Earth', presented in 1959 and 'The Poem' from 1968 – see *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, pp.175-208, and pp.209-220.

¹⁰ *The Poetics of Space*, trans Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), p.xxxii.

¹¹ 'Letter on "Humanism"', p.272.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ The line alluded to here was first composed in 1947 and appears in 'The Thinker as Poet', in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p.12: "...poetry that thinks is in truth the topology of Being...", the phrase 'topology of being', which is here understood as the saying of the place of being, also appears in 'Seminar in Le Thor 1969', *Four Seminars*, trans. Andrew Mitchell and Francois Raffoul (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), p.41, at which point reference is also made back to 'The Thinker as Poet', and to the short essay (from the same year as the seminar), 'Art and Space', in *The Heidegger Reader*, ed. Günter Figal, trans. Jerome Veith (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2009), pp.305-309.

¹⁴ See *Being and Time*, trans John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), especially §§19-21.

¹⁵ Unconcealment is not some abstract 'revealing' that belongs nowhere in particular, but is always itself placed. Indeed, the play of concealing and unconcealing belongs essentially to place – it is, one might say, the play of place itself.

¹⁶ The event is not to be understood as a merely temporal notion, but as itself properly topological (as is evident in the discussion below – Joseph Fell describes the event as "the original understanding of place, clearing, abode, home, whole, or totality, worlded 'earth', ground – all of which mean fundamentally the same", *Heidegger and Sartre: An Essay on Being and Place*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1979, p.204). The same is also true, I would argue, of the notion of the 'moment' (das *Augenblick*), in *Being and Time*, of which the event can be seen as a development, and of the notion of the *kairos* (the 'right' moment in the sense of an 'opening' – in Greek contrasted with *chronos*) that to some extent underpins both. One of the more general shifts in Heidegger's thinking (a shift that is essentially an explication of something already present in his thought) is towards an understanding of the topological character even of temporality itself. For more on the relation between *topos* and the idea of the moment, and between *topos* and time, see my 'Arendt and the Place of Thinking: Finitude, Time, and *Topos*', *Philosophy Today*, forthcoming, 2015.

¹⁷ 'Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry', p.56.

¹⁸ '...Poetically Man Dwells...', p.214. The character of language as 'beckoning' is taken up in more detail in my 'The Beckoning of Language', in Ingo Farin and Michael Bowler (eds.), *Hermeneutic Heidegger* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, forthcoming 2015).

¹⁹ In *Heidegger's Topology*, I summarily characterize the event as the 'disclosive happening of belonging' as a way of drawing together the notions of

'appropriating' (gathering/belonging), happening, and revealing/disclosing that all seem to be involved here – see *Heidegger's Topology*, pp.217-218.

²⁰ *Identity and Difference*, pp.37-38. The original translation, by Joan Stambaugh, has 'appropriation' (or less often 'event of appropriation'), rather than 'event', for *Ereignis* (so eg. "to think appropriation as the event of appropriation"), and instead of "thinking receives the materials" (where 'materials' translates *Bauzeug*), Stambaugh has "thinking receives the tools" (*Bauzeug*, *Bau* and *bauen* all figure in the original passage, although preserving this in the English translation is difficult, and neither Stambaugh's nor the modified translation given here attempts to do this).

²¹ 'Letter on "Humanism"', p.254.

²² '...Poetically Man Dwells...', p.220.

²³ *Ibid.*, p.221.

²⁴ Underlying both the English 'dimension' and the German *Dimension* is the Latin *dimensio* ('measurement') which in turn derives from, *dimetiri* ('to measure out'), and so from *metiri* ('to measure'). The connection Heidegger makes here between dimension and measure is thus rooted in the terms themselves.

²⁵ '...Poetically Man Dwells...', p.227 – the 'building' at issue here is the same 'building' that is at issue in 'Building Dwelling Thinking' (in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, pp.143-162), but which is here revealed as the taking of measure. It is worth noting that in the 'Letter on "Humanism"', 'building' also appears, although there it is thinking that "builds upon the house of being" – 'Letter on "Humanism"', p.272.

²⁶ 'The Nature of Language', *On the Way to Language*, p.107.

²⁷ Heidegger, 'Hebel—Friend of the House,' trans. Bruce V. Foltz and Michael Heim, in *Contemporary German Philosophy* 3 (1983), 100–101.

²⁸ One might argue that this is indeed the very essence of spatiality, and it is largely what leads Günter Figal to argue for the spatial (or a mode of the spatial – what

Figal calls 'hermeneutical space') as central to the possibility of hermeneutical experience (see Figal, *Objectivity: The Hermeneutical and Philosophy*, trans. T. D. George, Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2010, pp.121–53). Figal, however, sees language as a 'dimension' of this space (along with two other 'dimensions' which he names as freedom and time – see *Objectivity: The Hermeneutical and Philosophy*, pp.155ff), whereas on this account, spatiality, or perhaps better, dimensionality (which, as I argue here, is itself directly tied to relationality), emerges as belonging together with language. Additionally, one might argue that inasmuch as dimensionality is both active and open, so it is itself also closely bound to a mode of temporality and freedom, although not in the sense that the latter two are 'dimensions' of the former.

²⁹ Thus, in 'A Dialogue on Language', Heidegger talks of the "boundary of the boundless" – see 'A Dialogue on Language', *On the Way to Language*, p.41; see also my discussion in 'The Beckoning of Language'.

³⁰ Inasmuch as relation encompasses difference, so one might argue that in language is also found the difference of all differences – including even the ontological difference. In *Basic Concepts*, trans Gary E. Aylesworth (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), p.41, Heidegger talks of the ontological difference – the difference between being and beings – as that in which we have "our domain of residence", prefiguring the idea of the 'house of being', but in so doing, also suggesting the ontological difference as itself given in and through language. In 'Language' (in *Poetry, language, Thought*, pp. 202-210), Heidegger addresses language in direct connection with difference (here written by Heidegger in hyphenated form as *Unter-Schied*), although in a way that goes beyond the thinking of the ontological difference alone, and which draws difference into the same constellation of terms that includes the between and the dimension.

³¹ This might be thought to mark another point of difference from Figal's account in *Objectivity: The Hermeneutical and Philosophy* (since there he argues that it is

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- objectivity – standing over and apart from – that is basic to the possibility of encounter), except that Figal's notion of objectivity already carries a strong sense of activity within it.
- ³² 'Letter on "Humanism"', pp.254-55.
- ³³ '...Poetically Man Dwells...', p.220.
- ³⁴ 'Letter on "Humanism"', p.254.
- ³⁵ 'Art and Space', p.306.
- ³⁶ 'Letter on "Humanism"', p.254.
- ³⁷ '...Poetically Man Dwells...', p.220.
- ³⁸ 'The Nature of Language', p.106.
- ³⁹ The date is significant – as is indicated in note 13 above, this is the same year in which Heidegger talks, in the Le Thor Seminar, of his thinking as a 'topology of being', and the seminar makes direct reference to this essay in connection with the idea of such a topology.
- ⁴⁰ 'Art and Space', p.307.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., p.308.
- ⁴² "The question arises: Are places [*Orten*] initially and merely the result and consequence of making-space? Or does making-space acquire its peculiarity from the reign of gathering places? If this were the case, we would have to seek the peculiarity of clearing-away in the grounding of locality [*Ortschaft*] and ponder locality as the combined play of places", 'Art and Space', p.308.
- ⁴³ See 'The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking', in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p.57.
- ⁴⁴ 'Letter on "Humanism"', trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Pathmarks*, p. 272. See also Heidegger's comments in *Hölderlin's Hymne 'Andenken'*, pp.39-40; in *Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister'*, esp. pp.16-27 and p.166; and in 'The Nature of Language', p.100.
- ⁴⁵ 'Letter on "Humanism"', p. 272.

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- ⁴⁶ *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996), p.48.
- ⁴⁷ Joseph Kockelmans writes that "Heidegger's attitude in regard to metaphor is, at first sight at least, very paradoxical. For even though he claims that the language of the thinker cannot be interpreted in such a manner that metaphor would appear to be an important element in philosophical discourse, his later philosophy seems to be metaphorical though and though", 'Heidegger on Metaphor and Metaphysics', in Christopher Macann (ed), *Martin Heidegger: Critical Assessments*, Vol III (London: Routledge, 1992), p.294.
- ⁴⁸ Kockelmans comments that only Derrida seems to have taken this point seriously (in 'The Retrait of Metaphor', *Psyche: Inventions of the Other*, Vol. I, ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth G. Rottenberg, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007, pp.48-80) – see Kockelmans', 'Heidegger on Metaphor and Metaphysics', p.306. Although as I note below, Derrida's own position on the matter is also somewhat equivocal on this point, nevertheless arguing for a retention of some form of metaphoricity in Heidegger's thinking.
- ⁴⁹ Jean Greisch argues, though for somewhat different reasons than those at issue here, that the issue of metaphor is directly implicated with the issue of place, and more particularly with place as it appears in both the event [*Ereignis*] and in 'discussion' or 'placing' [*Erörterung*] (see especially 'Language in the Poem', *On the Way to Language*, pp.159-160) and in the event [*Ereignis*] – see Jean Greisch, 'Les mots et les roses: La métaphore chez Martin Heidegger', *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 57 (1973), pp. 433-55; see also Kockelmans' discussion of Greisch's reading in 'Heidegger on Metaphor and Metaphysics', pp.302-306. The notion of 'discussion' or 'placing' [*Erörterung*] warrants some further comment here. The way Heidegger himself characterises the notion explicitly draws out the topological implications present in the German. Thus Heidegger asserts that the preliminary steps in any 'placing' are the directing towards the place and then the

heeding of the place (see 'Language in the Poem', p.159 – Heidegger's further characterisation here of place [*Ort/Ortschaft*] as *gathering* should also be noted). All of Heidegger's later thinking can be construed as just such a 'placing': both a directing towards and a heeding of place.

⁵⁰ 'Letter on "Humanism"', p.272.

⁵¹ In this sense, one might also be led to suggest (though perhaps rather polemically) that one of the problems with many readings of Heidegger, early and late, is that *he is not read literally enough* – and this is especially true of the topological vocabulary that he so often employs. Thus we do not take sufficiently seriously the language of place and space as indeed topological and spatial, but instead treat it as if it actually referred to something else – the rub is that this may even be true of some of Heidegger's own readings of that language, at least early on. The tendency to deploy topologically and spatial language, and yet to do so in a way that fails to attend to its topological and spatial character, is widespread in the contemporary literature on Heidegger, as well as in philosophy more generally, and across many other disciplines and areas of inquiry. Thus, as I have argued elsewhere (see, for instance, 'Pensando topográficamente. Lugar, espacio y geografía [Thinking topographically: place, space, and geography]', *Documents d'anàlisi geogràfica* 60, 2015, in press, available as pre-print online at: <http://jeffmalpas.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Thinking-Topographically-Place-Space-and-Geography.pdf>), the turn towards space and place that is so frequently cited as a characteristic feature of contemporary thought does not represent a new engagement with space and place as such, but rather the deployment of a spatial and topological rhetoric in the service of already existing modes of critique that typically take the social and the political as their primary categories (almost always treating space and place as themselves political or social constructs). What thereby occurs is an obscuring and overlooking of the spatial

and the topological in the very proliferation of an apparently spatial and topological language.

⁵² Derrida seems to take a view of literality that is more or less along these lines resisting the treatment of Heidegger's language, and especially its key terms, as reducible to something either purely literal or purely metaphorical, but nevertheless retaining some sense of metaphoricity in the very withdrawal of metaphor – in its 'retrait'. Derrida's approach seems partly to derive both from his own defence of metaphor within the discourse of philosophy (as developed in 'White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy,' *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, pp. 207-272), and from his rejection of the notion of that which is 'proper to' with which he takes the literal to be at least connected (even if the two notions are not to be identified - see Derrida, 'The Retrait of Metaphor', p.49 – he also seems to associate the 'literal' and the 'proper' with a certain sense of univocity or monosemy, and the metaphoric with the polysemous). Yet as Derrida himself recognises, some sense of the 'proper' does indeed remain at work in Heidegger's thinking (it is most obviously present in the notion of the event), even though Derrida contests this very notion (one is tempted to say that he contests its very 'propriety'). Here Derrida's stance on literality and more importantly, on the 'proper' , like Heidegger's on metaphor, is itself directly related to a fundamental element within his more general philosophical position and to his critical engagement with Heidegger. What is at issue is the question of being: for Heidegger, the question of being is itself taken up in the question of language (and in the question of the *being of language*), whereas, for Derrida, it is in the face of the question of language that the question of being (especially inasmuch as this is indeed taken to be a question concerning *the proper*), to a large extent, falls away.

⁵³ To some extent one might argue that this is Kockelmans view – see 'Heidegger on Metaphor and Metaphysics',. pp.316-117 – except that Kockelmans makes no

reference to the issue of literality, but focuses only on the question of metaphor. It is also a view that can be seen as partly at work (and in a slightly different way) in Derrida's reading, and especially in his refusal of the notions of literality and propriety.

⁵⁴ The idea of the metaphorical and the literal as correlative notions, rather than substantively distinct, seems to me to follow from Donald Davidson's view of metaphor as a particular use of language that always depends upon some prior sense of literality – a view that also involves the denial that there is anything that could be called metaphorical meaning. See Davidson, 'What Metaphors Mean', *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 245–264. Davidson's insistence on the primacy of literal meaning should not be construed as somehow turning metaphor into merely a secondary notion, but rather preserves the character of metaphor as itself a distinctive use of language, and not as some other domain of meaning within language.

⁵⁵ 'Art and Space', p.307. It is such listening that underpins Heidegger's so frequent recourse to etymological consideration in his exploration of key terms and concepts. Attending to the origin of a term, and the meanings buried in its history and prior usage, is not only a way of freeing up our linguistic and conceptual preconceptions, but it is also a way of bringing to the fore connections that may otherwise remain implicit in the terms and concepts at issue.

⁵⁶ See *Heidegger's Topology*, p.37 and pp.249-250.

⁵⁷ *Holderlins Hymne 'Andenken'*, p.15.

⁵⁸ See Julian Young, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp.103-104.

⁵⁹ Given that the two are connected, and given also that Heidegger sees the covering over of this vibrancy as one of the features of modernity – as part of the 'emptying out' of language that is a feature of the current age – then one might ask whether modernity is prone to an emptying out of language in the form of a striving for

an impossible univocity, but also in the form of a concurrent and persistent *metaphorization* (that the two appear together even though they also appear in tension with one another may itself be taken to reflect a deeper contradiction within modernity itself).

⁶⁰ Hölderlin's *Hymne 'Andenken'*, p.40. See also

⁶¹ One of the few discussion that directly takes up the idea of literality as such is to be found in Owen Barfield's 'The Meaning of Literal' (in *The Rediscovery of Meaning and other essays*, Middletown, Conn., Wesleyan University Press, 1977, pp.33-43). Barfield's approach is very different from that pursued here – following a line of thinking that can be seen as implicitly deriving from Coleridge, Barfield argues against the view that metaphor can be seen as arising out of literality (or out of what he calls the "born literal"), and for a view of the fundamental relation of human beings to their world as essentially figurative. One might argue that the rethought conception of the literal advanced here – especially when connected with the idea of the image as developed below (here Bachelard's position is particularly noteworthy) – provides an alternative way of arriving at a similar conclusion to Barfield's even though in very different terms.

⁶² See Heidegger's discussion of Trakl's 'A Winter Evening' in 'Language', esp. pp.198-202.

⁶³ This seems to be present even in Kockelmans' discussion where the metaphoric and the figurative are treated as more or less the same – see 'Heidegger on Metaphor and Metaphysics', esp pp.297-298. As we shall see below, however, there is good reason to distinguish these, and to treat metaphor as merely one form of figuration, and even to consider the possibility that the figurative and the literal may overlap.

⁶⁴ See *The Poetics of Space*, 'Introduction', pp.xi-xxxv.

⁶⁵ 'Letter on "Humanism"', p.272.

⁶⁶ *Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister'*, trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996), esp. pp.16-27, and 166.

⁶⁷ *Hölderlin's Hymne 'Andenken'*, p.40.

⁶⁸ Thus in the discussion that immediately precedes Heidegger rejection of the "masterkey of all poetics", he directly connects image, symbol, and the movement away from things: "We are tempted to say that Sun and wind are given as natural signs, and this then means something else: they are symbols. In talking and thinking in this way, we assume that the "Sun" and "Wind" are known in themselves. We believe that even earlier nations and peoples first came to know the "Sun" and "Moon" and "Wind", and then, in addition, used these alleged appearances of Nature as images for some world beyond..." , *Hölderlin's Hymne 'Andenken'*, pp.39-40.

⁶⁹ *Hölderlin's Hymne 'Andenken'*, p.40.

⁷⁰ 'The Nature of Language', *On the Way to Language*, p.82

⁷¹ '...Poetically Man Dwells...', pp.225-226

⁷² It is just such a rethought conception of metaphor that is to be found in Davidson's 'What Metaphors Mean' in which metaphor is a use of language (and not a type of meaning) directed at the opening up of an image. See also my discussion of the Davidsonian approach to metaphor in connection with Heidegger's thinking of art in 'The Working of Art', *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2012), pp.237-250.

⁷³ Greisch argues that Heidegger implicitly retains a commitment to a rethought conception of metaphor even as he also rejects metaphor – see Greisch, 'Les mots et les roses: La métaphore chez Martin Heidegger' – although Greisch's account moves in a somewhat different direction than that suggested here.

⁷⁴ Gadamer says of Heidegger that he was a thinker 'who sees', and whose thinking took the form, not of a linear progressions of ideas, but something more like a spatial exploration approaching the same thing from different angles and

directions – see 'Martin Heidegger – 75 Years', in *Heidegger's Ways* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), p.17. For Bachelard, of course, there is a sense in which thinking is itself essentially based in the image – the image, for him, "stems from the logos", *The Poetics of Space*, p.xix.

⁷⁵ *The Poetics of Space*, p.xv.

⁷⁶ See *ibid.*, p.xvi, p.xix.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.xii.

⁷⁸ 'Reflections on My Philosophical Journey', in Lewis Edwin Hahn (ed), *The Philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer*, The Library of Living Philosophers (Chicago: Open Court, 1997), p.46

⁷⁹ '...Poetically Man Dwells...', p.216.

⁸⁰ See Seamus Heaney. 'A Sense of Place', in *Preoccupations, Selected Prose, 1968-1978* (London and Boston, Faber and Faber, 1980, pp.131-149), for an exploration of one mode of topology within English literature; for another such exploration (one that is both more far-reaching and also attuned to Heidegger), see Kenneth White, *The Wanderer and his Charts: exploring the fields of vagrant thought and vagabond beauty* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2010). Heaney is a focus for some of my discussion in *my Place and Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). On White, see my "'Where Hegel Meets the Chinese Gulls": Place, Word, and World in the Work of Kenneth White' (unpublished ms) which also discusses some of the themes explored above.

⁸¹ See 'Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry', In *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, p.60.

⁸² The essay has the subtitle 'Eine Erörterung von Georg Trakls Gedicht' – see *Unterwegs zur Sprache, Gesamtausgabe 12* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Klostermann, 1985).

⁸³ 'Die Sprache im Gedicht', p.37. The passage begins: "Originally the word 'place' [Ort] meant the point of a spear [*Spitze des Speers*]. In it everything comes together. The place gathers unto itself, in the highest and in the extreme. Its gathering power penetrates and pervades everything". The translation here differs from that

given in *Poetry, Language, Thought* which compresses the first two sentences, omitting the reference to the spear, to give: "Originally the word 'site' suggests a place in which everything comes together, is concentrated" (see 'Language in the Poem', pp.159-160). It is worth noting the way in which the English translation here itself serves to obscure the thematization of place – exemplifying the more general tendency to ignore or overlook the topological (whether in Heidegger's work or elsewhere).