Self, Other, Thing: Triangulation and Topography in Post-Kantian Philosophy

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ABSTRACT: Topography or topology is a mode of philosophical thinking that combines elements of transcendental and hermeneutic approaches. It is anti-reductionist and relationalist in its ontology, and draws heavily, if sometimes indirectly, on ideas of situation, locality, and place. Such a topography or topology is present in Heidegger and, though less explicitly, in Hegel. It is also evident in many other recent and contemporary post-Kantian thinkers in addition to Kant himself. A key idea within such a topography or topology is that of triangulation – an idea that appears explicitly in the work of Donald Davidson. Triangulation captures the idea of the topographical domain as constituted through the mutual relatedness of the elements within it, and as only to be understood through the mapping out of such relatedness – in the case of the topographical domain that is the world, through the relatedness of self, other, and thing.

I. Thinking and Triangulation

In a discussion of Heidegger on language, the Swiss theologian Heinrich Ott, significant for his hermeneutical appropriation of Heidegger within theology, reports Heidegger as acknowledging three ways in which thinking can proceed that can be summarised as follows: through the relation of between 'man' and the self, through reflection on the relation between 'man' and the other, and through reflection of the relation between 'man' and the thing.[1] Ott, who in this essay relates Heidegger's thinking to that of Martin Buber, characterises Buber's path as the second of these and Heidegger's, by Heidegger's own account, as the third. The three directions in which these

paths of thinking move – towards self, other, and thing – appear elsewhere in Heidegger's thinking as marking three different and fundamental modes of inter-relation. Thus, in lectures from 1919/20, Heidegger writes:

The manifold, then, which lies within the field and the field which accompanies the continuously flowing life in each of us [is this]: our *surrounding world* -- the land, regions, cities, and deserts, our *with-world* -- parents, siblings, acquaintances, superiors, teachers, pupils, civil servants, foreigners, the man there with his crutch, the lady over there with her elegant hat, the little girl with her doll, our *self-world*, -- inasmuch as all this is encountered by me, giving my life this personal rhythm. We live in this surrounding-, with, and self-world (the world "about" in general).[2]

The correspondence here is not exact (the 'surrounding' world is construed here more in terms of the physical environment than the thing), but Heidegger's distinction between these three different senses of world seems nevertheless to overlap with the distinction Ott reports Heidegger as invoking between self, other, and thing. Moreover, since the earlier distinction is surely not one between autonomous senses of world, but rather senses that surely implicate each other in an essential fashion – as they are all senses that belong to the idea of the world as such – so one might well be lead to remark that the three paths of thinking at issue here cannot be wholly autonomous either.

Although these paths may be distinct, they move within the same terrain, crossing similar ground if from different directions, providing varying perspectives on what are nevertheless the same landmarks. These three paths thus implicate each other in the same way as do different locales within the same landscape or territory. Indeed, the distinctness of those locales, and so also the distinctness of these three paths, depends not on their separation, but on their inter-relation – on their essential belonging together. Consequently, no matter which path we start with, it seems we will inevitably

also come across the others. What might thus be thought of as the partiality of our engagement is itself what enables an engagement that goes beyond such partiality.

As Ott reports matters, Heidegger's own emphasis is on the path that is oriented towards the thing, but this should not be seen as implying a disregard for the other two paths, and certainly not a dismissal of self or other. Since the thing does not stand apart from self or other – just as no-one of the three senses of world Heidegger identifies in the 1919/20 lecture stands apart from the other two – so any thinking that addresses itself to thing, or to other, or to self, will have to address all three, even if only implicitly. Indeed, in Heidegger's own thinking, notwithstanding the tendency for the focus on the thing to come to the fore, once can also discern the way in which both self and other are implicated within the same structure. The nature of that implication may require explication, which is partly what Ott attempts to do in his juxtaposition of Heidegger with Buber, but it nevertheless involves drawing out elements that are already present within the Heideggerian account rather than being arbitrarily added to it.

If we take self, other and thing as the three orienting concepts that are the basis for the three paths that Heidegger identifies, then we may say that they offer three different points of orientation and direction from which to *triangulate* the same domain – that reveal the terrain in its unity (although a unity that is necessarily incomplete) at the same time as they also show the elements within it in their own singularity. The notion of triangulation that appears here originates, not in philosophy, but in the field of topographical surveying – and so triangulation and *topography* can be viewed as associated concepts.

The basis of triangulation lies in elementary geometry and trigonometry: from knowledge of the lengths of two sides of a three-sided figure plus knowledge of the angle between them, one can arrive at

knowledge of the length of the third side; from knowledge of one side plus the two angles which it subtends, one can arrive at knowledge of the other two sides. Within a terrain already mapped, triangulation allows the determination of location within the terrain mapped; in a terrain that is not yet mapped, triangulation, together with movement across the terrain, allows the mapping of the terrain through the successive triangulation of the different locations with it. Crucial to triangulation is the idea of single surface that is constituted through the interconnectedness of the places within it, and the possibility of finding one's way round that terrain, or coming to be acquainted with its character, through repeated sightings and movements across it. Triangulation thus provides both *a way of understanding* a region, and its elements – the places that make it up – through the interconnectedness of those elements, and *an account of the very character* of that region, and its elements, as determined in that very interconnectedness.

Heidegger makes no reference to the notions of topography or triangulation as such, but he does characterise his own thinking as a *topology* – specifically a "topology of being" (*Topologie des Seyns*)[3] – and here topology and topography can be taken as overlapping terms (if there is a contrast it might be in their respective emphases on the *saying* or the *writing* of place).[4] The notion of triangulation, and the topographical context from which it comes, does appear, however, in explicitly philosophical terms, in the later writings of Donald Davidson, where it plays a key role.

Davidson first uses the notion of triangulation in an essay from 1987 in which he invokes the idea of triangulation as means to explicate the notion of objectivity, and with it to provide an account of the determination of the contents of thought:

If I were bolted to the earth, I would have no way of determining the distance from me of many objects. I would only know that they were on some line drawn from me towards them.

I might interact successfully with objects, but I could have no way of giving content to the question where they were. Not being bolted down, I am free to triangulate. Our sense of objectivity is the consequence of another sort of triangulation, one that requires two creatures. Each interacts with an object, but what gives each the concept of the way things are objectively is the base line formed between the creatures by language. The fact that they share a concept of truth alone makes sense of the claim that they have beliefs, that they are able to assign objects a place in the public world.[5]

Elsewhere Davidson explicates the same structure that is at issue here in terms of a three-way relation between what he terms the subjective, the intersubjective, and the objective[6] – corresponding to what appears in the discussion above as self, other, and thing. Already this structure is evident, if not completely explicated, in Davidson's original 1987 essay: *objectivity* is there presented as arising out of way each of at least two creatures interacts with the same object or objects on the basis of their own separately held beliefs or attitudes, but who are themselves connected by 'the base line' formed by language; *subjectivity* – the having of attitudes – arises in its own turn out of the interaction between at least two creatures who each stand in separate relation to the same object or objects at the same time as they are related to one another by language; and *intersubjectivity* – the capacity to interact with others through language in a way that is tied to the capacity to identify others' attitudes – arises out of the individual having of attitudes as these are related to the individual interaction with the same object or objects with which others also interact. Davidson is explicit in presenting the relation between subjectivity, intersubjectivity, and objectivity as one of mutual dependence – they form a 'tripod' so that "if any leg were lost, no part would stand".[7]

Triangulation as it appears in Davidson involves much the same topological structure, even though it is not named as such, that is also invoked in Heidegger. Davidson draws on the topographical background to

triangulation (its role in the determination of relative location) but, unlike Heidegger, without making any reference to his own project as a topography or topology. My aim here is to use the idea of triangulation, and the key concepts with which it is associated, to explore, if in a somewhat summary and synoptic fashion (there is much that I will leave out and much that I can only sketch), the character of the topography or topology that is evident in both thinkers. My intention is to see such a topographical or topological approach as itself characteristic of a central strand in post-Kantian thinking – a strand that derives directly from the work of Kant himself. To begin with, however, I want to look more closely at the character of triangulation more generally, and the structure of the topographic or topological with which it is associated. The features that emerge will provide the basis for the further elaboration of triangulation, topography, and topology in Heidegger and Davidson, in Gadamer, and in Kant and Hegel.

II. *Process, Relation, Surface*

In triangulation, the engagement with specific places enables an understanding of the larger network of places that makes up the region – that region is constituted through those places even as those places are constituted through their overlapping connection within the region. The same may also be said to be true of the internal structure of places – the character of a place is given in the structure of connection between the elements (which may themselves be understood as places) within that place. The way places are determined in their interconnection – an interconnection that can never be given all at once, nor in any final or exhaustive fashion (no mapping is ever complete) – is the basis for the possibility of triangulation, but it also means that triangulation does indeed operate on the basis of the repeated tracing out those connections and only on that basis. There is thus nothing to which

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appeal can be made in triangulation, or that determines the triangulative structure itself, other than the interconnected character of the structure and the interconnected character of its elements.

The character of triangulation that is apparent here, and that can be drawn from its geographical employment, is also present in triangulation as it appears philosophically, including its appearance in the work of Heidegger and Davidson, and in the way it can be seen to determine a mode of post-Kantian thought more generally. Before going further, however, the character of triangulation requires some additional elaboration, and some of its key features need more clearly to be identified. In fact, there are three features that can be seen as at the centre of triangulation, and so also three key features that mark out the character of a topographic or topological approach in philosophical thinking and especially in the post-Kantian.

First, triangulation has the character of an always unfinished *process*. Not only does triangulation have an essentially temporal or dynamic character – the triangulative mapping of a region requires repetition – but any triangulation always allows for further triangulations, and so no mapping, as I noted above, is final or complete. The dynamic, but also always incomplete, character of triangulation is a consequence of the fact that triangulation is itself 'local', meaning that it operates always through an engagement with specific places, and only thus is there any engagement with the region. Since every place is itself open to triangulation within it, as well as further triangulations without, so triangulation is a potentially continuous process that is brought to an end only temporarily and on the basis of more or less arbitrary convention or decision.[8] Moreover, the processual character of triangulation is reflected in the dynamic character of the topographical or topological as such – in the very character of place and region. This is most obvious in the way places are connected through movement (which according to Aristotle is always *local* movement – movement in relation *to place*). Places

are thus *essentially* dynamic (this also means that places are not connected to space alone – they implicate the temporal and the spatial both).

Second, triangulation is fundamentally based in *relation*. Such relationality itself reflects the character of region and place as given only in and through their interconnectedness. Relationality is thus a feature of triangulation as the means by which a topographic or topological structure is known or understood, but also of the topographic or topological as such. This does not mean that places can simply be decomposed into the relations between them (as if relations are all there really is and there are no places at all), but rather that places are not given independently of other places – for there to be one place is for there to be many places, and so places appear always as part of a larger topographic or topological field. Given the dynamic character of triangulation, and so of the formation of place and region, the relationality of place and region is itself always in process, and so worked out through places. It is not a relationality that consists in some static array of relations encompassing the region in its entirety – the relationality of the topographic or topological is itself localized and dynamic (as indeed is all genuine relation).

Third, triangulation, and so the topographic or topological also, always operates across a single plane – across a single *surface* (the *singularity* of the surface being here tied to the interconnectedness of the triangulative relations). There is thus no hierarchy that determines the ordering of the relations nor, indeed, of the places that make up the region; there is nothing else that determines the relations or the places other than those very relations and places – nothing that determines the region and its elements other than the region and its elements. Regardless of whether they themselves make explicit use of the notions of triangulation, topography or topology, these features – process, relation, and surface – are evident in Heidegger's work as well as Davidson's.

III. Topology and Triangulation in Heidegger

It might be said that the way triangulation appears in Heidegger , at least as so far discussed, does not exhibit quite the character of triangulation as is set out in the discussion immediately above. Heidegger certainly identifies a triangular structure that encompasses self, other, and thing, but he might seem not to give priority to that structure in the way that might be expected of a genuinely topographical or topological approach. Heidegger's early treatment of world as having three inter-connected aspects does, however, point towards a more developed form of triangulation, one that operates throughout his work in several ways, and sometimes in ways that remain implicit rather than being clearly explicated.

In the analysis of world that appears in Division One of Part One of *Being and Time*, for instance, Dasein's character as being-in-the-world is worked out through what can be seen as a three-fold relation involving Dasein's relation to itself (Dasein's self-understanding), but also Dasein's relation to others and to things (especially to things in their equipmental character), as worked out in terms of a number of other over-arching structures (including understanding, affectedness, discourse and so on).[9] The structure that emerges is indeed a structure very much like the topographical structure at issue in triangulation. Moreover, the character of the analysis as centrally focussed on the particular mode of being that is *Dasein* – 'there-being', or as one might also say, 'placed being' – suggests that what is at issue is indeed a certain sort of analysis of the being of place itself.[10]

One of the characteristic features of Heidegger's thinking, in *Being and Time* and elsewhere, is a refusal of the metaphysical impulse to look for an understanding of being in what lies beneath or beyond. This is not to say that Heidegger remains content with the 'everyday', or with what passes for the

'common' opinion, but rather that real questioning remains with things rather than looking to replace them either with something to which they can be reduced ('sense data', 'atoms', 'matter', or even 'process') or something that supposedly transcends them ('God', 'Idea', 'Mind'). Heidegger's claim, in *Being and Time*, that "being is the *transcendens* pure and simple"[11] does not run counter to this refusal, but is instead one of the ways in which it is exemplified. The *transcendens* here does not refer us to that which transcends in the sense of some entity or realm that goes beyond. Instead, the *transcendens*, and transcendence, refers to that which makes possible the appearing of things, rather in the manner of the visual horizon as it stands in relation to what is seen within it.[12] Admittedly, *Being and Time* is not wholly true to the commitment to a thinking that gives priority to 'surface' in the sense suggested here (the tendency to look to temporality as the underlying source of the unity of Dasein is especially problematic in this regard),[13] but it does appear strongly oriented to such a way of thinking. The analysis of Dasein is thus generally exhibited in terms of a structure of multiple and inter-related elements rather than a single underlying principle or ground.

In Heidegger's later work, the tendency to look to such a complex, but also 'superficial', structure is also present – and present in what might be regarded as a much more straightforward and unambiguous fashion. It is notably evident in Heidegger's focus on the thing, to take one especially salient example, as that which gathers the elements of world rather than as somehow dispersed into any more fundamental set of such elements.[14] The structure of the Fourfold is thus indeed one of complexity of 'surface' rather than 'depth': a structure whose elements are both constituting and constituted; whose elements are organised 'horizontally', one might say, rather than it terms of a 'vertical' hierarchy.[15] What is rejected in the emphasis on surface is the demand for a deeper ground on which the surface is supposed to rest or in which it inheres. The surface is instead understood as a

complex but unified field whose unity derives from the intrinsic inter-relation of its elements (something neatly exemplified, of course, in the way a landscape is made up of a set of inter-related locations or places). Understanding the character of the surface is thus a matter of understanding the inter-relatedness that is given in the surface as such, and so the emphasis on is directly tied to the emphasis on relation.

In *Being and Time*, the relational character of the structure that Heidegger elaborates is evident at the very same time as is its 'surface' character. There the structure of world brings this to the fore in a particularly clear fashion – world is given, as we saw earlier, through a complex interrelation of elements including self, other, and thing. In the later thinking, the emphasis on relation is perhaps even more explicit – whether in the discussion of the thing, the Fourfold, or the *Ereignis*. Belonging and the gathering into belonging – 'appropriation' – which is one of the ideas at work in the *Ereignis*, is precisely a matter of a fundamental relating and relatedness. It is thus that Heidegger can say of the *Ereignis* that it is "that realm [*Bereich*], vibrating within itself, through which man and being reach each other in their nature…".[16] Here the *Ereignis* appears as itself a *topos* – the realm in which we are gathered to being, in which the elements of world are draw together, and in which they are thereby also set apart.[17] As such, it has exactly the character that is evident in the structure of triangulation.

If surface and relation are tied together, then so do they also connect with the idea of process or, as is perhaps more relevant here, *event*. In this respect, the idea of the *Ereignis* draws all three features of triangulation and topography/topology together since the *Ereignis* presents no hierarchy but rather a single 'vibrating' field; it is a relating and gathering that allows both identity and difference; it has the character of a constant unfolding, opening and emerging. The *Ereignis* is not some static structure, but has exactly the character that is also evident in the topological and the topographic as a

dynamic process – although with the caveat that its character as processual is not something that stands apart from its character as relational and superficial. Neither process nor event (nor indeed relation or surface) can be treated as an underlying principle in which all else is founded – and this is an essential part of what is entailed by the idea of the structure at issue here as topological or topographical, and as elucidated through the idea of triangulation. In its dynamic character, the structure that appears here – whether understood through the *Ereignis*, the happening of place that is the happening of the Fourfold, the 'event' of disclosedness that is the event of truth (the 'clearing' – *Lichtung*) – never achieves completion, even though there is a sense in which it is always moving towards completion. It is thus unifying but not unified. The thinking that goes with this sort of structure is thus a thinking that rejects the idea of a finished system – and it may be that this points towards the underlying reason for the failure of *Being and Time* as originally envisaged.

IV. Topography and Triangulation in Davidson

In Davidson's account, triangulation arises out of a consideration of the problems of interpretation – it can be seen as a direct development out of the approach Davidson's adopts in his earlier work to the problem of developing a theory of meaning for a natural language, and his conception of interpretation as dependent on the interaction between speakers, and between speakers and their environment.[18] Yet although triangulation begins in interpretation, it is not restricted merely to interpretation alone. In Davidson triangulation appears as the basis for understanding the very possibility of meaning or content – including the content of attitudes and the character of actions – and so for understanding the possibility of thought, of mental life,

and, as we have already seen, for the possibility of the entire structure of subjectivity, inter-subjectivity, and objectivity.

As Davidson presents it, interpretation depends upon the to-and-fro interaction between different interpretive actors and elements: between self, other, and thing, and between attitudes, meanings, and actions. It is through such interaction that the very possibility of content or meaning arises. Moreover, the character of interpretation as an interactive process is itself based in the character of meaning or content as such. Interpretation is thus not to be construed merely as a process by which the interpreter gains access to statically determined meanings or contents. Rather, meaning and content are themselves indeterminate, arising only within the dynamic interaction between self, other, and thing, and within a larger relational framework of attitudes and actions.[19]

In one of his later essays, Davidson takes a line from Wittgenstein as the epigram to his discussion: 'meaning is like going up to someone'.[20] The line not only draws attention to the social character of meaning, the central focus of the essay, but also captures something of the sense of meaning as itself processual, as dynamic rather than static, as something that we 'do' (something also implicated in the idea of meaning as indeed social – since such sociality resides in the active engagement with others). This applies not only to meaning, in Davidson's account, but also to everything that may fall within the domain of meaning – to actions and attitudes, and to the content that arguably makes up the very fabric of human lives – as well as to the domain within which meaning is itself formed. Thus it is only in the relational and dynamic interaction between self, other, and thing – between the subjective, interusbjective, and objective – that the self comes to appear *as self*, that the other appears *as other*, that the thing appears *as thing*.

It is commonplace to read Davidson on triangulation as making a primarily epistemological or even methodological claim (a tendency

supported by Davidson's own tendency to frame his approach in terms of questions of knowledge[21]) – and so to treat Davidsonian triangulation as if it were merely a process by which one gained access to meaning or content. But it cannot just be this, especially not if Davidson's employment of triangulation is itself to be taken seriously – triangulation operates because of the prior entanglement of the elements of triangulation within a single topographical or topological field, and only because of this. It thus cannot be construed as giving access to anything other than that which it also constitutes – one cannot separate the elements ontologically and expect the same epistemological structure to remain. In Davidson's case, the tendency for many commentators to want to read the structure of triangulation as purely epistemological not only weakens the claim at issue, but it also renders it largely inexplicable, and readily defeasible. This is one reason why the Davidson account has so often fared poorly among analytic readers whose predilection, at least when it comes to questions of meaning and content, is indeed for epistemology over ontology.

Yet if we do indeed read Davidson as offering an implicitly ontological account – one in which the possibility of knowledge of self, other and thing is inseparable from the mode of being of self, other and thing – then it also has to be emphasised that the sort of ontology that appears here is not one that looks to privileged any one element over the others. Davidson's thinking, no less than Heidegger's, also resists the tendency to look to any form of foundationalist metaphysics – as it also resists any foundationalist epistemology (at least the sort that is usually looked for) and for much the same reasons.[22] If we look to understand the ontology that is at issue in subjectivity, for instance, it can only be an ontology that derives from the way subjectivity is indeed embedded within that larger and more holistic domain that encompasses the intersubjective and objective also. Moreover, although Davidson insists that the realm of content – the realm of meaning and the

mental as it were – supervenes on the realm of the physical, he nevertheless also denies that the one can be simply be reduced to or replaced by the other.

In this latter respect, the 'monism' that may be said to characterise the topographic or topological, and that consists in the commitment to the idea of a single, if complex topographic or topological field, is itself reflected in Davidson's work in the idea of a similar complex unity that encompasses the mental and the physical ('anomalous monism'), and that generally leads Davidson to refuse any simple characterisation of his position as 'materialist' or 'physicalist' (which is not to say that Davidson denies the mind is material, but that he does not think it is *only* material).[23] Davidson's tendency to emphasis his underlying ontology as an ontology of *events* is also not to be construed as actually implying any simple *reduction* to events (as if there were *nothing but* events), since even the language of events calls upon concepts other than the concept of event alone. There are thus no pure vocabularies that stand apart from other vocabularies, no final or privileged languages in which the world can be completely described, and so even the project of ontology (and of epistemology too if it comes to that) turns out to have the character of a topographical or topological exploration, and to exhibit the same features.

If there are no final vocabularies, no privileged languages, then neither are there any complete 'truths' either, which does not mean that there are no truths at all, or that truth can never be 'objective'. Truth itself has something of a topographic or topological character on Davidson's account in the sense that any true sentence always stands within a larger body of true sentences, and so within also within a linguistic context that is itself interpretive. Truth arises within the triangular structure of subjectivity, intersubjectivity, and objectivity. Truth is not transcendent of that structure, which means that there are no truths independently of interpretation, even though the structure can itself be said to depend on the possibility of truth – to depend, in other words,

on the idea of an 'objectivity' that goes beyond 'subjectivity' or 'intersubjectivity', and that constrains them both, even though it is also only worked out in relation to them. In interpretation, one might say, one looks to make claims that are true, and yet interpretation, and so the assertion of such individual truth claims, itself depends on there being an already existing body of truths by which our interpretive efforts are oriented and directed in relation to things (although a body of truths that is nevertheless incapable of any finite enumeration or specification). Truth, which encompasses both the truth of individual assertions and the more encompassing character of our placed orientation to things, is thus not separable from, but is rather closely entangled with, our active, interpretive engagement in the world.

Here truth exhibits exactly the character of the topographic or topological field – individual truths are dependent on a larger structure of truths that is never completely specifiable and yet is itself dependent on the working out of truth in particular cases.[24] This topographic conception of truth, which is what underpins the conception of truth as 'objective', is part of what has lead some readers of Davidson's work mistakenly to treat his position as anti-realist or coherentist, at the same time as that conception grounds Davidson's rejection of scepticism and relativism. Both of these latter positions depend on assuming a 'foundationalist' or 'non-interpretive' conception of truth or knowledge (often a conception of truth as based in the idea of that which is infallible or indubitable) which cannot, of course, be realised, and whose non-realizability is then taken to show its 'relativity' or irrelevance.

IV. Topography, Triangulation, Hermeneutics

In Davidson, triangulation appears out of consideration of the structure of *interpretation*. The reading of Heidegger that appears in Ott's work, and

which I took as a starting point for the discussion of the idea of triangulation, is explicitly configured by Ott himself within the framework of the *hermeneutical* – and this is so in spite of the fact that Ott's focus is on Heidegger's later thinking, from which any reference to hermeneutics is largely absent.[25] Ott does not draw on triangulation explicitly, nor does he avail himself even of the idea of the topological. Yet what Ott offers is clearly a hermeneutical reading of later Heidegger that is also imbued with a topographic or topological sensibility exactly in tune with the sort of account I have developed here. The connection that appears here between the topographic or topological and the hermeneutical, and between triangulation and interpretation, is no mere accident, but reflects something fundamental about the topographic or topological character of interpretation and the hermeneutical.[26]

Hermeneutics, and interpretation along with it, is essentially topographical or topological. It moves always within the same dynamic and relational field that is itself indicated by the idea of the hermeneutic circle – a notion that itself draws upon the figure of a certain form of spatialized movement. The topographical character of the hermeneutical or interpretive, as well as hermeneutical character of triangulation, is especially evident in the way the triangulative structure that appears in Heidegger is developed in the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer's conception of understanding as always based in the dialogic or conversational engagement between dialogical partners in relation to some subject matter – some *thing* (*Sache*) – itself provides an almost exact correlate to the interpretive version of triangulation that appears in Davidson. The Gadamerian emphasis on understanding as conversational or dialogical, itself a version of hermeneutic circularity, itself captures the same dynamic movement that is evident in triangulation. Taken hermeneutically, moreover, understanding is characterised *as unifying* (hence, in Gadamer, the importance of the bringing together of horizons, of the

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achievement of a 'common language'), and yet as never given over to a completed *unification* – understanding is always an unfinished process, always a process in which there is further territory to explore (even within what we thought had been explored already).

A central idea in hermeneutics as developed in both Heidegger and Gadamer, and in Davidson's interpretive approach, is also an idea clearly at work in the topographic or topological – and is especially evident in its triangulative character: the notion that understanding is not undermined by the placed character of our engagement with things and with the world, but is rather made possible by it. In topographic terms, this idea has an exact correlate: we gain access to a region only through being at a certain place within it. Our being placed, and place itself, is thus what opens up the region, and other places, to us. Similarly, within the structure of triangulation, we gain access to that to which we are not directly connected through the indirect connections that arise out of the interconnected character of the larger structure. In hermeneutic terms, it is precisely our being placed that establishes the need for understanding. Such being placed is not a matter of some generic locatedness, but of standing in relation to ourselves, to others and to things. The triangulative structure with which we began this discussion is indeed the structure that belongs to place as such, but it is also the structure that belongs to understanding and so to the hermeneutical.

Günter Figal has pointed to the way in which, in hermeneutical experience, "one is concerned with something that one himself is not, with something that stands over against [*entgegensteht*], and, because of this, places a demand. Hermeneutical experience is the experience of the objective [*das Gegenständliche*]."[27]. Significantly, Figal sees the 'objective' character that he here attributes to hermeneutics as also entailing a notion of hermeneutic *space*, and so as moving in the direction of an explicit topography or topology, but without any sense of the way *place*, and not merely space alone, might be

implicated here. Figal presents his 'objective' hermeneutics as part of a critique of Gadamerian hermeneutics, in particular. Yet Figal's characterisation of the hermeneutical experience, its 'objectivity' and its associated 'spatiality', seems actually to capture something that is nonetheless essential to the hermeneutics of Gadamer as well as Heidegger. In the work of both, and also in Ott's approach, hermeneutics appears as itself topographically or topologically structured and oriented – and the same is true of the Davidsonian account of the nature of interpretation. For all of these thinkers, understanding is always placed, arising only in and through such placedness, and this is true also of the very possibility of any sort of meaningful appearance, and so of the very possibility that anything can be present to be understood or to be encountered.

V. Topography and Triangulation in Kant and Hegel

Although Davidson and Heidegger are the key figures in any account of philosophical topography or topology in recent and contemporary thought, it is not with either of them that the idea of such a topography or topology has its origins. Instead it is with the critical writings of Immanuel Kant that a topographical or topological mode of thinking seems first to appear. Kant does not refer directly to triangulation, nor does he explicitly describe his own project as a topography or topology, and yet the critical-transcendental project is one that Kant frequently characterises in geographical and cartographic terms, and within which he also draws directly upon topographic and topological notions.[28]

The fundamental problem that Kant's thinking in the first Critique – the *Critique of Pure Reason* – aims directly to address is the question as to how one can gain an estimate of the proper extent and bounds of a domain, in this case knowledge or experience, on the basis only of access to a part of that

domain. Kant's answer to this question is based on ideas and examples drawn explicitly from geometrical and topographic thinking. so, for instance, if one knows that the earth is a sphere, that is, if one already has a grasp of its intrinsic boundedness, even if one does not know the extent of those bounds, one can, from knowledge of the degree of curvature as given in one section of the sphere, nevertheless determine the diameter, which is to say the actual boundary, of the sphere and so of the earth as a whole.[29] This example is one that Kant himself uses to explain the character of the critical project in which he is engaged, and he frequently resorts to other geometrical and topographical or geographical examples. He is, by his own account, a "geographer of reason"[30] – one concerned to work out reason in its proper extent and bounds.

This critical project – the project oriented towards the working out of the bounds at issue here – is necessarily also a transcendental project, since the working out of the proper bounds of reason or knowledge is to ground reason or knowledge – to demonstrate that on the basis of which it is possible. The critical project thus aims to 'curb the pretensions' of reason, but in its transcendental character it also aims to exhibit that which enables reason to operate so as to give rise to knowledge.

The transcendental is not so much a species of conditional argument, as is often assumed, as a mode of thinking that looks to demonstrate the intrinsic integrity of a domain from within that domain itself (it is this sense of the transcendental that actually grounds the transcendental as it can also be seen to be at work, in spite of their own tendencies to misconstrue the notion, in Heidegger and Davidson).[31] The bounds of reason that the transcendental project looks to delineate are bounds given in the very character of the domain that those bounds also establish. In this respect, the bounds of reason are not mere limitations – they do not mark, to use Heidegger's way of putting the matter, that at which reason or knowledge properly *stops*, but

rather that from reason and knowledge *begin*.[32] The transcendental project thus has much the same character as the project of the geographical surveyor who must map a territory on the basis of an engagement within the territory and through movement within and across it or, indeed, the philosophical topographer with whom we are already acquainted and who looks to understand a philosophical terrain through the triangulative relations that make it up.

As a form of grounding, though an unusual form, the transcendental project does not look to any independent or external ground – whatever grounding it achieves is given only in and through that which it grounds. In keeping with its topographical or topological character, that grounding operates through the inter-relation of the elements that make up what is grounded. Consequently, the project of grounding is itself one that involves a circular movement between the elements at issue (a circularity itself mirrored in the circularity of the hermeneutical[33]) that does not result in a single completely finished structure, but that can always be addressed anew. As to some extent Kant himself recognizes, the task of grounding reason and knowledge – the task of both critical and transcendental philosophy – is one that lies always before us.

Kant is a foundational figure in any discussion of philosophical topography or topology precisely because it is Kant who first opens up the possibility of a mode of philosophy that is oriented to place, to *topos*, as both a focus of inquiry (it is no accident that Kant was the first to lecture on geography in the modern university), and as providing the basis for a method of inquiry. In this respect, moreover, if one takes the topographical or topological to capture something at the heart of Kantian thinking, then the post-Kantian must be understood as itself characterised by a continuation of the topographical or topological orientation, regardless of whether it is always explicitly recognised as such. Indeed, it is perhaps significant that the figures

who loom largest in the reconstructed history of the Kantian and post-Kantian that is suggested here, which is also the reconstructed history of a tradition of philosophical topography or topology, are Kant, Heidegger and Davidson – the one standing at what might be thought its beginning and the others at what can be seen as its culmination or near culmination.

It may be thought that although one can find a similar emphasis in Kant on notions that match aspects of the topographical or topological emphasis on process, relationality, and surface, what is often missing from Kant is the same emphasis on the triangular relation between self, other, and thing with which I began this discussion. There is some point to such a claim, since Kant does not, at least not in the first *Critique*, offer any account of intersubjective engagement as playing a key role in the possibility of knowledge or in the constitution of self and thing, subjectivity and objectivity, and this is so even though Kant does emphasise the intersubjective validity of judgments. Nevertheless, Kant does present an account, developed in the 'Transcendental Deduction' and the 'Refutation of Idealism' in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, of the subjective unity given in consciousness as necessarily interdependent with the objective unity given in things – as in Davidson, subjectivity and objectivity are inter-related, even if, in Kant, intersubjectivity seems somewhat absent from the picture.[34]

If Kant seems, in spite of the strongly topographical or topological character of his approach, to overlook intersubjectivity, this is an omission that is not true of Hegel. Indeed, one might argue that it is precisely the role of the intersubjective that occupies a central position in the Hegelian account. The famous dialectic of the master and slave provides a striking exemplification of just the sort of relational constitution of elements – encompassing self *and other*, as well as thing – that is at the heart of the topographical or topological.[35] The structure of recognition (*Annerkennung*), understood as a structure of mutual constitution between elements, that is

essentially at issue here is a central theme of Hegel's phenomenology, and also appears elsewhere in his thinking. Moreover, it is not only the structure of recognition that points towards a connection with the topographic or topological, but the very notion of dialectic. The dialectic is itself a mode of dynamic relationality that mirrors the dynamic relationality, even down to its three-way character, at work in triangulation.

Although Hegel's thought certainly seems to bear the marks of the relational and the dynamic that characterise the topographical and the topological, and one even seems able to find, as indicated above, variations on the same sort of triangulative structure that is present in Heidegger and Gadamer, Hegel's metaphysical commitments might be thought to go directly against the topographic or topological emphasis on surface. Here recent non-metaphysical readings of Hegel that emphasis the continuity of the Hegelian project with that of Kant, and re-interpret Hegel's metaphysics in ways consistent with such an approach, are especially important.[36] Although such readings do not explicitly draw upon the language of topography and topology, the view of Hegel that they propose is indeed one that draws him much closer to such a place-oriented mode of thinking.

Perhaps most significant in this regard for the discussion here, and unsurprisingly so given the sources on which it draws, is Paul Redding's hermeneutically-oriented reading of Hegel which, precisely because of its hermeneutical character, does indeed seem to draw Hegel more directly into the orbit of a topographical or topological mode of thinking.[37] Redding takes up the idea of recognition as it operates in Hegel, but interprets this notion in a way that connects with Gadamer as well as with other earlier proponents of hermeneutics from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (figures who can be seen as having had an influence on Hegel himself). The picture that emerges is indeed of a mode of Hegelian thought that actually exhibits many of the features that are also present in Gadamer (who although he

draws on Hegel also distances himself from what he takes to be much less hermeneutically-inflected aspects of the Hegelian position).

Hegel's position (and indeed the role of German idealism, and so the positions of Schelling and Fichte also) in any reconstruction of the history of the topographic as a mode of philosophical thinking requires much more attention than can be given here, but there can be no doubt that Hegel must be a significant figure in that history, even though Hegel does not himself draw on the topographic, or the geographic or cartographic, in the immediately evident way that does Kant. Significantly, Hegel's influence can itself be seen in Davidson's work, although indirectly, through the work of G. H. Mead. The Davidsonian idea of the three-way interdependence between self, other, and thing, which Davidson himself acknowledged (in conversation if not in print) is adumbrated in Mead's work, could thus be seen as itself a development of the Hegelian theory of recognition.[38]

VI. Topography, Language, and Philosophy

It might be objected that all of the talk of triangulation, and of topography and topology, no matter how much it may be connected with Kant or Hegel, with Heidegger, Davidson, or with any other thinker, merely constitutes a metaphorical gloss on a set of ideas and approaches that in actuality are more complex and diverse, and that actually share no real connection with any genuine topography or topology at all. The appearance of a single encompassing style of approach might thus be taken to indeed be nothing other than a conjunction of metaphor and simile – a convergence in a mode of expression that obscures a much greater divergence in ideas. Such a claim would be relatively weak, however, if it were based solely on the supposedly metaphorical character of the convergence at issue; if it were to be substantiated, it would need to engage more directly with the specific

arguemnts and approaches at stake. Yet the very idea that the use of topographical and topological ideas and images, in Kant and Hegel, in Heidegger or Gadamer, or even in Davidson, can indeed be construed as primarily metaphorical requires some comment, since it raises fundamental issues concerning the character of topography or topology, and of the language of place in philosophical thinking.

Heidegger himself is quite explicit, at least in his thinking from the early-1930s onwards (essentially from the point at which he begins to engage more closely with poetry and especially with Hölderlin) in resisting any metaphorization of his thinking – an issue that most often arises in those contexts in which issues of topography or topology are to the fore.[39] Metaphoricity, he argues, always moves in the direction of metaphysics,[40] and he denies that his use of topological ideas and images – most famously his talk of language as "the house of being" – can be construed as metaphorical (as the "transfer of the image 'house' onto 'being'").[41] Heidegger is unusual, however, in explicitly attending to the issue of metaphor here – for most philosophers metaphors come so easily that not only is there little attention given to what the use of metaphor might mean or how such metaphorical thinking might function, but that the resort to metaphor, if that is what it is, barely even attracts attention. Even in Davidson, as well as in Kant, there remains an ambiguity as to exactly how the language of triangulation and topography, of geography, geometry and cartography, is to be understood. On the one hand it may seem as if Davidson, for instance, does use triangulation as a metaphor, and yet when he first introduces the concept, he does so by first giving the example of triangulation in the determination of location, and then goes on to talk explicitly of "another sort of triangulation" that nevertheless seems somehow connected to the first (if not metaphorical, then is the use here analogical, or is there an implicit sense in which the

spatial and the topographic somehow operate across both these domains in a way that is more than either analogy or metaphor alone?)

If we were straightforwardly to treat the language of triangulation, or of topography and topology, as metaphorical, then the connection that such languages establishes with the thinking of place would be rendered ambiguous, and could even be argued to be effectively severed. The characterisation of something as metaphorical, whatever creative power it might have for the provocation of new ideas, nevertheless largely undercuts any substantive connection that may exist between that which is the subject of the metaphor and the context in which it is applied. Thus to say of someone, as Shakespeare's Romeo says of Juliet, that "she is the sun", is not to suggest that any extensive study of solar phenomena will have direct relevance to the person to whom the metaphor is applied. Even if we accept that metaphors depend on drawing attention to similarities between the things identified, still it is generally not the case that those similarities are in any way systematic or wide-reaching. Indeed, the more they are the less we are likely to suppose that the identification is metaphorical.

If we refuse to treat the language of topography or topology as metaphorical, then this means that we must take seriously the topographical or topological character of the very concepts at issue here, and that are addressed by means of the topographic and topological. Self, other and thing will themselves stand in an essential relation, not only to one another, but also to place, as well as to space and time, and will be determined in a way that reflects the character of place as such. In arguing for a topographical or topological strand within post-Kantian philosophy, I have been arguing not merely for a stylistic or rhetorical convergence among the philosophers I have discussed, nor even a methodological similarity in their approaches, but for a common orientation, whether explicitly recognised or not, around the concept of *topos* or place. Of course, it might be said that such a topographical or

topological orientation is characteristic of much recent and contemporary thinking even as it extends beyond the post-Kantian. It is commonplace, after all, to talk of a turn to space and place as characteristic of much twentieth century thought – Foucault famously declaring that as history shaped the thinking of the nineteenth century, so space forms the horizon of the twentieth.[42] Going beyond Heidegger or Davidson, even beyond the topographic elements that might also be present, though not explored here, in Foucault himself (in whose work one can discern the influence of Kant as well as Heidegger[43]), one might point to forms of topography and topology at work in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (especially in their *Thousand Plateaux),* in Peter Sloterdijk, Henri Lefebvre, and in many others.

There is, however, an important difference to note here. Although there is indeed a proliferation of topographic, topological and especially spatial ideas and images in many contemporary thinkers, regardless of whether or not we take them to belong to a specifically post-Kantian tradition, much of this proliferation takes the form precisely of a proliferation *of metaphors*. What is notably absent is any sustained engagement with the ideas of the topographic or the topological as such, or any deployment of these notions in ways that match the sort of broadly ontological, but nevertheless 'anti-metaphysical' deployment, to be found in the post-Kantian tradition as I have outlined it here. Thus in Deleuze and Guattari, for example, not only is there a tendency to metaphorize the resort to the topographical and topological, but their own use of topographic, topological and spatial metaphors typically involve no real reference back to the character of place or space. The topographic and the topological are employed for their polemical or political, or perhaps their creative, usefulness – *for their effects* – and not because of any deeper role that place itself has to play in the formation of the phenomena in question. Topography and topology thus seem often to appear as little more than a kind of storehouse of imaginative and rhetorical resource,

but not as having any intrinsic ontological significance. This is especially so, not only in Deleuze and Guattari, but also in Sloterdijk, whose *Spheres* trilogy seems to give itself almost completely over to a eclectic and often intoxicating play of ideas and images the philosophical significance of which often remains opaque and ambiguous.[44]

Although Lefebvre's approach is more solidly grounded in the preceding philosophical and geographical tradition, and can also be seen to connect with the work of Foucault, as well as with a broader tradition of French of historical-geographical thinking (especially as grounded in Paul Vidal de la Blanche, Lucien Febvre and others), still the topographic and topological ideas that appear in Lefebvre operate largely as sites for the working out of social and political forces, and as secondary to them, rather than as key elements in their own right (space, on Lefebvre's account, is thus more *produced* than *producing*). In this latter respect, the general tendency, even within the so-called spatial or topographic turn, to treat place – and space and time – as social or political *constructions* immediately renders unclear the genuinely topographic or topological character of that turn.

What this suggests is that in spite of the wider spread of topographic and topological ideas and images, the idea of philosophical topography or topology remains a distinctive mode of philosophical thinking, and so can indeed be understood as marking out a characteristic form of post-Kantian thought – a mode of thought that is configured around a continuation of the Kantian critical-transcendental project, and in which place has a central role. Such thinking is indeed marked by an understanding that takes self, other, and thing as given within a single, dynamic, complex field or region – a region that is only entered into through the places that make it up and are determined through it, and that can never be rendered in any final, finished form.

The conception of philosophical thinking that is present in such a topography or topology is one that stands in close proximity to the hermeneutical, and also to the critical-transcendental (it also has an important connection to phenomenology, even though this is not a connection that I have had time to pursue here). It is also a mode of thinking that attends closely to its own bounds – as one might expect given the focus on place – refusing to be drawn in the direction of a privileging of any one of the concepts that appears within it (so neither self, other, nor thing has any absolute priority), that sets itself against traditional foundationalisms, whether epistemological or metaphysical, and that also pays heed, therefore, to its own topographical or topological character – to its own place and placedness. It is perhaps the attentiveness to the idea of boundary, and the necessity and productivity of that boundedness, that most clearly marks out the topographic or topological from other modes of contemporary thought. One might say, in fact, that the unbounded is what marks out the work of many of the thinkers who are otherwise seen as part of the topographic or spatial turn, and this is itself indicative of a tendency to prioritise, not *place*, but rather a certain modern and very specific conception of *space* as unbounded extension or flow.

To a large extent this attentiveness to boundary also means that the topographic or topological must always stand in an antagonistic relation to the character of modernity – at least if modernity is indeed seen, as it so often is seen by both its champions and its critics, as centred around the refusal, even the denial, of boundaries (which is what is evident in the rise of the notion of space referred to immediately above). Such a denial is the refusal and denial of place or *topos*, and so of the larger structure of the topographic or topological that has been sketched here. It is also, I would argue, a refusal or denial of our own human mode of being, although that topic, and the larger question of the ethical direction in which the topographic or topological

moves us – a direction in which the ethical and ontological appears as almost indistinguishable – is one that must await another occasion.[45]

Finally, if we do take the topographical or topological as characteristic of a significant strand within post-Kantian thought, if not as almost identical with it, then the task that then opens up is one of turning that insight directly back into the discourse of post-Kantian thinking and reflecting on its consequences. What implications might an explicit recognition of its topographic or topological character have for contemporary discussions of the post-Kantian, and how might it result in a reconfiguration of post-Kantian research and discourse? Might it lead to a different way of understanding the history of post-Kantian thought, and to a different mapping of the territory of the post-Kantian, of the concepts that are central to it, of the direction in which it opens up? What implication might this have, in turn, for the contemporary philosophical engagement with place and for the continuation of the project of philosophical topography or topology?

Notes and references

[1] See Heinrich Ott, 'Hermeneutic and Personal Structure of Language', in J. J. Kockelmans (ed.), *On Heidegger and Language* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwester University press, 1972), p.190.

[2] Heidegger, *Grundprobleme der Phaenomenologie, 1919/20*, ed. Hans-Helmuth Gander, *Gesamtausgabe*, Vol 58 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2010), pp.33-34,

[3] See 'Seminar in Le Thor 1968', *Four Seminars*, trans. Andrew Mitchell and François Raffoul (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), p.41.

[4] Elsewhere I have used the two terms more or less interchangeably – although in a Heideggerian context 'topology' seems the more appropriate.

[5] 'Rational Animals', *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), p.105.

6 See especially Three Varieties of Knowledge', *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*, pp.205-220.

7 'Three Varieties of Knowledge', *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*, p.220.

8 So we come to a stop in the triangulative process simply because the mapping that we have arrived at is sufficient for our purposes or because we now have enough of a sense of the location or locations at issue.

9 See also Heidegger's lectures from 1923 in *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, trans. John van Buren (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), esp. p.69, in which Heidegger uses the example of the table in his family home as bringing the several and interconnected elements of world together.

10 For more on the sort of topographical or topological reading of *Being and Time* that is at issue here see my *Heidegger's Topology* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2006), especially Chapter Three, pp.65-146.

11 *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), H38.

12 Although as Heidegger becomes increasingly concerned with the problematic elements in *Being and Time* in the period after 1927, so he also comes to reject the language of transcendence as itself misleading – see *Heidegger's Topology*, pp.163-172.

13 See ibid, pp.104-126.

14 See, for instance, 'The Thing' in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), pp.161-184.

15 See *Heidegger's Topology*, pp.109-125.

16 *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp.37-38.

17 See *Heidegger's Topology*, Chapter Five, esp pp.230ff.

[18] See, for instance, Davidson's discussion in 'Belief and the Basis of Meaning' in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001, 2nd edn), pp.141-154; see also my discussion of Davidsonian interpretation in *Donald Davidson and the Mirror of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), Chapters Two and Four, pp.53-144.

[19] Since content or meaning only appears within this triangulative structure, and so in an essential relation *to things*, Davidson has himself characterized his position as entailing both a holism with respect to content, and an externalist view of content. Davidson has often tended to view these as separate, but they can both be seen as deriving from the same topographic or topological structure. The holism of content as worked out within the triangulative structure of the topographical is obviously a function of the relationality of that structure, but although the externality of content can be seen as a function of the way content is worked out in relation to things or objects, the fact that it is worked out in this way is indeed a function of its relationality (and this holds true even though externalism depends on the causal determination of content). Moreover, one might say that the more basic sense in which externalism is at play here is actually that which derives from the way each element, including the self, is determined *in relation to* elements that are apart from or 'external' to it.

[20] Davidson, 'The Second Person', *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* p.107 – the line is from Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans, G.E.M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker, and Joachim Schulte (London: John Wiley, 2010 – rev 4th edn), §457.

[21] Thus the essay that sets out the structure of triangulation most fully is 'Three varieties of Knowledge' – and there Davidson talks of the triangular dependence between knowledge of self, knowledge of other minds, and knowledge of the external world. The fact that it is knowledge that

Davidson talks of here does not mean, however, that it is only knowledge that is at issue – nor does it imply that Davidson's concern is purely epistemological. For a fuller discussion of the character of Davidson's thinking on these matters, see my *Donald Davidson and the Mirror of Meaning*.

[22] Davidson rejects the standard approach to epistemology that looks to provide a foundation to knowledge either by looking to its causal basis (whether in sensation or elsewhere) or to any set of supposedly indubitable propositions or 'intuitions', and yet he also rejects the challenge to knowledge that comes from scepticism - see my discussion in *Donald Davidson and the Mirror of Meaning*, pp.208-229.

[23] "I have resisted calling my position either materialist or physicalist… Monistic my view is… but a form of materialist chauvinism it is not" – Davidson, 'Replies to Essays X-XII', in Bruce Vermazen and Merrill Hintikka (eds), *Essays on Davidson: Actions and Events* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp.244-245.

[24] For more on the Davidsonian account of truth – and its connection to Heidegger's account (with respect to which there are important parallels), see my 'The Two-fold Character of Truth: Heidegger, Davidson, Tugendhat', in Babette Babich and Dimitri Ginev (eds.), *The Multidimensionality of Hermeneutic Phenomenology* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014), pp. pp. 243-266.

[25] The notable exception is the 'Dialogue on Language' in *On the Way to Language,* trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp.1-56.

[26] For a more detailed discussion of the centrality of place to hermeneutics see my 'Place and Situation' in Jeff Malpas and Hans-Helmuth Gander (eds),

Routledge Companion to Philosophical Hermeneutics (London: Routledge, 2014), pp.354-366.

[27] Figal, *Objectivity: The Hermeneutical and Philosophy*, trans. T. D. George, (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2010), p.2.

[28] For a more detailed discussion of Kantian topography or topology see Jeff Malpas and Karsten Thiel, 'Kant's Geography of Reason', in Stuart Elden and Eduardo Mendieta (eds), *Kant's Geography* (New York: SUNY Press, 2011), pp.195-214, and also Jeff Malpas and Günter Zöller, 'Reading Kant Topographically: From Critical Philosophy to Empirical Geography', in Roxana Baiasu, Adrian Moore and Graham Bird (eds.), *Contemporary Kantian Metaphysics: New Essays on Space and Time* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp.146-166.

[29] *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood, The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A759/B787.

[30] *Critique of Pure Reason*, A760/B 788 – Kant uses the phrase to refer to Hume, but there is little doubt he would also apply it to himself.

[31] The issue of the transcendental, including its role in Davidson and Heidegger, is something I have explored in a number of places – see especially: 'The Transcendental Circle', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 75 (1997), pp.1-20; 'From the transcendental to the 'topological': Heidegger on ground, unity and limit', in Jeff Malpas (ed), *From Kant to Davidson: Philosophy and the idea of the transcendental* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp.75-99; 'Gadamer, Davidson, and the Ground of Understanding', in Jeff Malpas, Ulrich Arnswald, and Jens Kertscher (eds), *Gadamer's Century - Essays in Honor of Hans-Georg Gadamer (Cambrdige, Mass.:* MIT Press, 2002), pp.195-215.

[32] Martin Heidegger, 'Building Dwelling Thinking', in *Poetry Language Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p.154.

[33] See my 'The Transcendental Circle'.

[34] The interdependence between subjectivity and objectivity in both Kant and in Davidson is discussed in more detail in my 'The Constitution of the Mind: Kant and Davidson on the Unity of Consciousness', *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 7 (1999), pp.1-30.

[35] See Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp.104-110 – Miller uses 'lord' and 'bondsman' as more accurate translations of Hegel's terms *Herr* and *Knecht'* than 'master' and 'slave'.

[36] See, for instance, Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Robert R. Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

[37] See Redding, *Hegel's Hermeneutics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).

[38] See Mead, *Mind, Self and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934). The Hegelian influence on Mead arises through Mead's teacher Josiah Royce, the leading American idealist thinker of the nineteenth century.

[39] See my 'Poetry, Language, Place', forthcoming.

[40] *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996), p.48.

[41] 'Letter on "Humanism"', trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.272.

[42] Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16 (1986), p.22.

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[43] On reading Foucault in relation both to Heidegger and to a topographical or topological mode of thinking, see Stuart Elden, *Mapping the Present: Heidegger, Foucault and the Project of a Spatial History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2002).

[44] The first volume of Sloterdijk's *Spheres* is translated into English as *Bubbles: Spheres Volume I: Microspherology*, trans. Wieland Hoban (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2011). In that volume, Sloterdijk engages Heidegger directly on the matter of space, claiming that *Being and Time* needed to have been completed by a second volume *Being and Space* – Sloterdijk's own volume supposedly filling that gap and so providing the missing companion to Heidegger's *magnum opus*. Sloterdijk seems to show no understanding of why such a second volume would not have been possible within the framework of *Being and Time* itself. He also comments (as he must given the priority he wishes to accord his own volume) that the issue of space in *Being and Time* has been 'mostly overlooked by commentators', although it would be more accurate to say that the commentary on this matter has been mostly overlooked by Sloterdijk. In fact, Sloterdijk's own discussion in *Spheres* is notable for *not* engaging with what it claims to be its central focus, namely space, but rather throwing together a melange of diverse spatialities and topographies, or at least the images, metaphors and ideas deriving from these, with little or no questioning of what their connection might be or indeed what might actually be at issue within them.

[45] Although it is a direction already clearly suggested in the existing literature – in developments of the Hegelian theory of recognition, in some readings of Kant, in certain appropriations of Heidegger and Gadamer. It is a theme in my own work elsewhere (although in need of much further elaboration), as well as in some of the parallel thinking (albeit from a very different starting point) of Andrew Benjamin – see, for instance, his *Place,*