

## Pippin's *The Culmination*, Heidegger's Question, and Hegel's Revenge

As Hegel and Heidegger struggle with their opponents, a characteristic move they make is to out-flank—to envelop—they. They show their opponents that, when they think their seemingly opposed thoughts through properly, they will see that they cannot make good on their capacity to think them without presupposing the more encompassing philosophical vision that Hegel/Heidegger offers. So when Hegel and Heidegger meet, who will outflank—or envelop—whom? Among the many important questions that Robert Pippin's new book, *The Culmination*, raises, this will be my focus in what follows.

Pippin's Heidegger argues that Hegel is committed to an untenably narrow vision of what we thinkers and our world are like, arising out of 'what [Daniel] Dahlstrom has called "the logical prejudice" (C 48)<sup>1</sup>—hereafter LP. Hegel, however, argues that views that seemingly challenge that vision can only be thought within its strictures, though this will also open up a perspective from which certain possible parallels between Heidegger's and Hegel's projects become visible. That same perspective raises critical questions concerning some facets of Pippin's reading of Heidegger,<sup>2</sup> including whether we can make good on the perspective from which one would have to entertain thoughts that Pippin suggests show Heidegger the failings of the LP; and I will close by examining a further version of the above Hegelian complaint—this time that appreciating the point of Heidegger's supposedly broader philosophical approach will inevitably require that we be drawn back within the outlook it seeks to escape. I will tentatively sketch there a further riposte—that this Hegelian demand rests on a narrow vision of what philosophical self-consciousness must be like. Though

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dahlstrom 2001. References to *The Culmination* use the abbreviation 'C' and to Heidegger's works the abbreviations given in the bibliography, followed by page numbers. For comments on earlier versions of this piece, I would like to thank participants in the symposium on C held at Potsdam University in June 2023 and the July 2023 meeting of the International Society for Phenomenological Studies and, in particular, Bill Blattner, David Carbone, Sacha Golob, Andrea Kern, Thomas Khurana (who also organised the Potsdam symposium), Mark Okrent, Joseph Schear, Ingvild Torsen, Mark Wrathall, and Robert Pippin himself.

<sup>2</sup> In contrast, I will not attempt to assess the accuracy of Pippin's reading of Kant or Hegel, nor that of his reading of Heidegger's reading of either.

inspired by Heidegger, neither of our principal combatants may welcome this riposte; but Pippin might.

*The Culmination* is rich and complex and my response to it here brief and partial; and although I address other issues it raises in a companion piece to the present article, to which on occasion I will refer, there is still much in Pippin's book that is fascinating but upon which I have been unable to touch in either piece.

## 1. The Logical Prejudice and its Influence

Pippin articulates the LP in a number of ways. It is a 'dogmatic', 'question-begging' commitment to 'what Heidegger calls "logic," or the centrality of judgment as the main vehicle of intelligibility in our access to beings': 'the primary availability of being [is] to discursive thinking'<sup>3</sup> and 'the primary availability of ... beings to human being is as material for cognition, possible contents for assertoric judgment' (C xi, xii, 121). This commitment leads, in turn, to an 'identification of being with knowability', 'the meaning of being' identified as 'to be intelligible, knowable': 'only what is fit to be the content of an assertion'—'what can be grasped conceptually'—'can count as a being' (C x, 59, 48, 8). Pippin believes that Heidegger shows the 'insufficiency' of this 'measure of the real' by showing, for example, that the forms of understanding upon which the LP fixates themselves rest on further forms of understanding that they cannot capture—specifically, a prior disclosure of entities as meaningful which 'orients Dasein' but which it 'cannot ... make sense of theoretically, ... directly articulate,' or 'determinately discriminate' (C 99, 20, 45).

Pippin proposes that the influence of this prejudice—the implications of which are pushed to a tumultuous 'culmination' in Hegel—is remarkably wide: 'I think Heidegger is ... right in charging that *all* enterprises in philosophy as such ... subscribe to the basic premise [he] has identified ... or else they content themselves with isolated intellectual exercises without much sense of why any of it should matter' (C xii). (We will return to the latter thought below.) But Pippin also asks, if 'the identification of the meaning of being with intelligibility and ultimately knowability, cannot claim to comprehend all that there meaningfully is and could be ... how should philosophy respond' (C x)? 'What Heidegger

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<sup>3</sup> I will not capitalise 'being' in such uses—as is often done—and alter some quotations to match.

wants to do', he claims, 'is renew metaphysics on a proper footing' (C 12 n. 18, cf. 206). But a significant question that Pippin's Hegel poses to his Heidegger, and which my final section examines, is whether—to echo Pippin—we can articulate a sense of why the sought 'replacement' should matter—can represent a recognizably relevant rival to 'philosophy as such'—without succumbing once again to the LP.

But the first concern I wish to raise about Pippin's discussion addresses one of the more immediately striking elements in his reading of Heidegger, his identification of Heidegger's Question of Being with what one could call a 'Question of the Meaning of Being' (QB and QMB respectively, hereafter).

## 2. Heidegger's Question: the Manifestation and Unity of Being

Heidegger specifies being as 'that which determines entities as entities' (SZ 6, quoted at C 60) and investigating that might seem to be a more or less conventional exercise in metaphysics. But Heidegger immediately appends to the above specification 'that on the basis of which entities are already understood'; and it is this that catches Pippin's eye:

In the following, I will be relying heavily on this construal of Heidegger's project—that at its centre is [a] concern with the availability of beings in their significance, that this is what he is after in asking for the meaning of being: its meaningfulness. (C 47)

'Heidegger's question is not "what is there?" but "what allows" beings to be manifest?'—this being 'the "first" question all philosophy must be oriented from—the possible availability of anything at all' (C 60, 217).

I agree with Pippin that, for Heidegger, there is a crucial question that underlies what might be taken to be central metaphysical questions—such as that of 'what beings there are', 'what it is to be an entity' and 'what accounts for things' existing' (C 35, 24 n. 39, 40)—and that that question merits description as one of the 'meaning of being'. But, in at least some important contexts, Heidegger turns to that expression to articulate a very different question to that upon which Pippin focuses.

Heidegger claims that he found 'concealed' in Aristotle's remark that 'being is said in many ways' (1928: 1003a33) an 'urgent' question, that of 'the *unity of the concept of being in general*' (LR x, BPP 120). It is urgent because it raises an objection to the very possibility of

ontology. There being no such unity might seem to confirm the view that there are multiple ways of being—an ontological pluralism, as it has become known, which is with some justification ascribed to Heidegger. But if there is no ‘single unifying concept of being in general that would justify calling these different ways of being ways of *being*’ (BPP 176), then whatever distinctions such pluralists may be marking, they will not be entitled to label them ‘*ontological* distinctions’, identifying different ways of achieving some singular feat, ‘being’. ‘Being’ would then be ‘said in many ways’, but as ‘bank’ is; and there would be no ‘unity of the topic’ (BCAP 162) of ontology—the ‘science ... [that] stud[ies] all things that are, *qua* being’” (Aristotle 1928: 1003b15-16)—any more than there is of ‘bankology’—the ‘science’ of financial institutions and riversides. Thus, in setting *Being and Time* the task of identifying a ‘horizon for any understanding whatsoever of being’ (SZ 19), Heidegger is seeking to defend ‘the possibility ... of ontology as such’ (BPP 228), there being a subject-matter of which this –ology—be it pluralist or monist—could be a *logos*, an account.<sup>4</sup>

It is in raising concerns of this sort in two of the lecture series he gave while drafting *Being and Time* that Heidegger turns precisely to the notion of the ‘meaning of being’. For example, he complains that Husserl has not thought through the implications of his ‘claim[ing] that the most radical distinction of being’ can be drawn between consciousness and reality:

If we press further and ask what being means here, in regard to which [consciousness] is distinguished from reality, we search in vain for an answer and still more for an explicit articulation of the very question. In drawing this fundamental distinction of being, not once is a question raised ... regarding what it is which directs the entire process of making this distinction of being, in short, what the meaning [*Sinn*] of being is. From this it becomes clear that *the question of being is not an optional and merely possible question, but the most urgent question ...* (HCT 114-15, italics in the original)

Similarly, Heidegger insists that, in distinguishing ‘the empirical being of mind and the ideal being of the judged proposition’, ‘and between the temporal occurrence of the empirical and the supratemporal subsistence of the idea’, ‘in the background of the discussion lie basic concepts and distinctions taken from the fundamental, universal question about the meaning

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<sup>4</sup> For further discussion, see McManus 2013a.

[*Sinn*] of being' (LQT 42). In asking 'What kind of being is something's being-true?', for example, we will come to the question of 'how ... truth itself [is] to be understood in relation to the idea of being in general' (LQT 42).

At least in these contexts then, the concern that prompts Heidegger to turn to the notion of 'the meaning of being' is that we can be in no position to ascribe to entities 'different ways of being' if we do not have a—or, if we do have, have yet to clarify our—unified 'concept of being in general'; and it strikes me that characterising this concern as one concerning the manifestness of being would be misleading. Rather it concerns whether there is such a thing to manifest. The issue is not how we are aware of or acknowledge this 'topic' but whether we can make good on the notion that it *is* a topic.

### 3. Logic as metaphysics, and logic\* as metaphysics\*

Nonetheless, I agree with Pippin that questions about the way in which we grasp what we grasp are key for Heidegger. Corresponding to his ontological pluralism is a view one might call intelligibility pluralism: to the profound differences between entities with different modes of being there correspond profound differences between what it takes to grasp those entities. So while we might roughly envisage our grasp of what Heidegger calls the present-at-hand as a 'pure beholding' (SZ 147), we grasp the ready-to-hand 'in using it' (HCT 191), and other Dasein through 'being-with' (SZ 113)—our sharing in the world they grasp.<sup>5</sup> The task Heidegger sets for *Being and Time* is exploring the key further case of 'where and how ... being [is] accessible in general' (BCAP 162)—as it must be, he thinks, if we are capable of doing ontology. For Heidegger then, 'the question of the *being of beings*' indeed 'is at the same time a question about the way in which the meaning [*Sinn*] of being can be experienced [*erfahrbar wird*]' (WDR 175).

But to understand how Pippin identifies the QB with a QMB is difficult, nonetheless. My forthcoming-b makes a provisional case for an understanding that Pippin's discussion helps us to articulate and which interestingly allows us to see Heidegger as undertaking—while rethinking—a Hegelian project, one which closes the gap between what are recognizably a QB and a QMB and, in doing so, seeks to make good on a perspective from

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. C 37-39's illuminating discussion of how our understanding of animals compares and contrasts with this feat.

which philosophical insight—as substantive insight into the world acquired on an a priori basis—is possible.<sup>6</sup>

Both versions of the project rest on the commitment that ‘to be is to be intelligible’, such that if one understands the latter feat, then one understands the former feat. But in Hegel’s version, the project is ‘saddled with the orienting assumption that intelligibility (or thinkability) is a matter of discursive, ... determinacy-determining judging’ (C 176). In light of this commitment—‘what Heidegger calls “logic” (quoted above)—‘logic is metaphysics’ and ‘metaphysics is logic’ (C x, 146 n. 6). (I refer to this version of the project hereafter as the ‘LM project’.) For considerations that attempt to defend this Hegelian version of the project by challenging the notion of a form of being that would instead elude the LP’s vision of intelligibility, Pippin turns to an important passage in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, with a particular and, for us, particularly important example at stake:

[Postulating] an ineffable *Ungrund*, unavailable for determinate thought because always presupposed, does not amount to a philosophical position. The language of the charge is well known from the preface of *Phenomenology*, where Hegel ... claims that this is all an attempt to pass off ‘its absolute as the night in which, as one says, all cows are black’ ... One indeterminacy claimed as source is indistinguishable from any other possible candidate. If it is differentiable, a determinate position, then such a source has some sort of conceptual determinacy ... [Whereas t]hat which in principle falls outside the thinkable designates nothing at all. Such an *Ungrund* is an *Unsinn*. (C 157-58, quoting Hegel 2018: sec. 12)<sup>7</sup>

From this perspective, precisely the kind of proposal that we have seen Pippin’s Heidegger make ‘actually does not amount to a philosophical position’ but instead an empty gesture towards ‘a merely undifferentiable indeterminacy’ (C 209). As Pippin puts it in his 2019, ‘[e]ntertaining the idea of an unintelligible being’—of which a background to ‘conceptualising thinking’ that ‘cannot be determinately discriminated’ (see above) might well seem to be an instance—is ‘not thinking at all’; it is a ‘nonthought’ (pp. 77, 76), on the entertaining of which we cannot make good.

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<sup>6</sup> See C 8, 148 and 156.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. C 150-52, 166, and 175.

Nonetheless, there is scope, my forthcoming-b argues, for seeing Heidegger as subscribing to a refined version of the LM project. If ‘the limitations of “logic” for metaphysics’ lie in ‘the insufficiency of the discursive form for any authentic engagement with being as such’ (C 92), then an option would be to strip out the LM project’s inadequate conception of intelligibility—‘logic’—and replace it with something better.

Heidegger’s concept of being-in-the-world could be seen as providing the basis for such a venture. That concept makes significant demands on an entity if it is to be a subject—to be Dasein. In particular, Dasein must understand its world: not have a stab at understanding it, but rather actually understand it, *if* it is to be Dasein.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, analysing what Dasein understands can be analysing the world and the entities that populate it, though crucially with the richer, more pluralistic conception of the ‘availability of beings’ sketched above—and which I will call ‘logic\*’—in place of the LP.

In this light, we can also revisit ‘the night in which ... all cows are black’ and the above criticism of a Heideggerian *Ungrund*. Interestingly, Pippin proposes that ‘Heidegger will restate this criticism and claim that it begs all the crucial questions’ (C 159); and according to my suggestion above, Heidegger could concur that ‘[t]hat which in principle falls outside the thinkable designates nothing at all’ *were it not for* that claim’s being ‘saddled’ with the LP’s conception of the ‘thinkable’. So saddled, it begs the question of what form ‘the primary availability of being’ to us takes and, as a result, also the form ‘the actuality of the actual’ (C 8) takes. But one could strip out those commitments and retain the potentially sound—‘unsaddled’—thought here that there is something deeply problematic about ‘nonthoughts’ that postulate forms of being of which no one—the postulators included—can have any grasp.

The above picture has implications—which will be of importance below—for how we must think about the work of the philosopher. As SZ 139-40 puts it, the method of ‘ontological interpretation’ is to ‘attach itself’ and ‘listen in on’ Dasein’s understanding. But with an intelligibility pluralism in place of the LM’s ‘logic’, what we can ‘listen in on’ need not be solely what Dasein’s discursive judgments reveal and not also, for example, its appreciation of the background disclosure of meaning upon which those rest. But the *kind* of work Heideggerian ‘ontological interpretation’ has to do is also now recognizably different from the provision of conventionally-understood metaphysical claims. We philosophers can ‘listen in on’ Dasein’s ‘previous disclosure’ of being, because, of course, we are already

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<sup>8</sup> For discussion, see McManus 2017.

Dasein;<sup>9</sup> hence, such listening serves—to use one of Heidegger’s borrowed metaphors—to remind us of what we already understand,<sup>10</sup> rather than provide us with new information or new beliefs to hold. Another metaphor he favours is that of pointing.<sup>11</sup> His phenomenology points us to what we—as Dasein—already grasp, an understanding that is ‘there’ for us to see if our attention can be turned back to it, even if in philosophizing—perhaps in the grip of the LP—our attention has drifted away. Given how different the grasping of the import of such reminders/pointers is to that of grasping truth claims of the sort we might imagine as the stock in trade of metaphysics, we should then perhaps talk here not only of a ‘logic\*’ but also ‘metaphysics\*’ and, hence, a ‘logic\* is metaphysics\*’ project’ (hereafter ‘L\*M\* project’).<sup>12</sup>

#### 4. The L\*M\* project and our ‘dark inheritance’ of meaning

For me, one of the most interesting features of Pippin’s discussion is how it helps us to articulate the possibility of a L\*M\* project; and my forthcoming-b identifies passages in C that suggest that this understanding of how Heidegger might have viewed a QB-QMB connection is Pippin’s understanding too. But I also argue there that some of the considerations that Pippin offers on Heidegger’s behalf against the LP sit uncomfortably with an L\*M\* project. Here I will examine an issue that another such set of considerations raise, an issue which the previous section’s discussion helps articulate.

Pippin offers as evidence against the viability of the LM project various phenomena that are variously ‘dark’, ‘elusive’, ‘unreachable’ and ‘unintelligible’. These represent such evidence as that project is committed to the claim that the world can be made sense of—that ‘to be is to be intelligible’. But as Pippin stresses, thanks to the LP, that project is committed to more: for it, ‘the important claim’ is that to be is to be ‘*[r]ationally or discursively intelligible*’ (C 141, n. 2).

So while it might be the case that the evidence Pippin cites entails that the LM’s founding claim is false, that need not entail that the corresponding ‘unsaddled’ claim—that

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<sup>9</sup> On whether one’s not being is a ‘nonthought’, see McManus 2017: sec. 6.

<sup>10</sup> Cf., e.g., MFL 146-47: ‘being is what we recall’.

<sup>11</sup> McManus 2013b documents and discusses this and other related methodological notions.

<sup>12</sup> One could see C 174-76 as discussing the extent to which Hegel’s project might merit the same label and for related reasons.



‘to be is to be intelligible’—is; and nor would it require that that evidence be evidence of the unintelligible in anything other than the LP-saddled sense. Indeed it would seem to me precisely in the spirit of Pippin’s critique of the LP—and, moreover, of an intelligibility pluralism—to wonder whether that which looks dark to the LP may, in fact, not be.

A key instance of such ‘darkness’<sup>13</sup> for Pippin’s Heidegger is the ‘obscurity of the sources of possible and actual meaningfulness’: the prior disclosure of meaning upon which discursive thinking rests is an ‘endlessly elusive’, ‘dark inheritance’ (C 68 n. 52, 43, 177). But two understandings of this charge can be found in Pippin’s discussion. One, briefly stated, is that such a disclosure ‘allows no discursive articulation’ (C 152 n. 13). But crucially, Pippin qualifies this statement by adding ‘and so *in that sense* no intelligible account’ (italics added). Similarly, though he tells us that the ‘disclosure of sources of meaningfulness ... is ... only originally available nondiscursively’ (C 217-18), that would still seem to be a form of availability. So we see a ‘darkness’ here only if we are ‘saddled’ with the LP’s demand that understanding be ‘statable in propositional terms’ (C 73).

But we find a second understanding of the LP’s demand for ‘rational explicability’ and, with it, of disclosures of meaning as ‘dark’ in Pippin’s discussion of their ‘contingency’, their being ‘groundless’, ‘*mere* happenings’ (C xi n. 6, 65):

Dasein is ... always already ‘thrown’ into its world, inheriting a structure of significance, mattering, salience, and importance ... Crudely put, this contingent ground, contingent because no account of why there is one such inheritance rather than another is possible, ... cannot itself be the object of any sense-making interrogation because it is presupposed by any mode of comportment or understanding at a time. Reflecting on it, ‘turning around’ to grasp it, simply, as it were, brings it along as, again, always already assumed. (C 22-23)

Setting aside the question of why such contingency should render such disclosures ‘dark’, the question I wish to raise is whether we can indeed conceive of such an ‘inheritance’ *as* contingent—whether there is a perspective that would allow us to think of it as, in this way, ‘dark’.

If the inheritance is ‘presupposed by any mode of comportment’, it is not clear that we can consistently conceive of its not ‘prevailing’ (C 77). The notion that the inheritance

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<sup>13</sup> My forthcoming-b discusses another: Dasein’s ‘*unintelligibility* to itself’ (C 166).

‘cannot itself be the object of any sense-making interrogation’ raises a similar worry, in that asking for reasons and *not* finding them would seem to require a ‘sense-making interrogation’. If that inheritance cannot be such an object, then we may not be able to provide it with a justification; but it is not clear that we can subject it to doubt either. The LP may drive us to confusedly seek grounds where it makes no sense to seek them. But we continue to play the LP’s game if we take our failure to arrive at such grounds to show that that which we confusedly sought to ground is *groundless*. Rather seeing it as having *or lacking* grounds, as grounded *or* groundless would all seem to be ‘nonthoughts’.

It might be objected that the above reflections trade on such disclosures of meaning being fundamental and that I have the wrong phenomena in view here: instead relevant examples would be the ‘the medieval focus on *ens creatum*’ and the ‘standing reserve’ of our contemporary ‘technological orientation’ (C 66), which are recognizably contingent ‘disclosures’.<sup>14</sup> But Pippin’s describes these as ‘prevail[ing] even while our experience in the world everywhere manifests saliences of significance that *belie* the[ir contingently] dominant notion[s] of being’; so these too conjure up only a deceptive darkness, rather than an ‘inevitable’ genuine unintelligibility: they render us ‘not receptive to what would otherwise be available’ (C 49, 67, 206, italics added).

Even if successful, the above challenge to the coherence of the proposals that Pippin ascribes to Heidegger—their being ‘nonthoughts’—does not entail that Heidegger does not subscribe to them. But I do think a more charitable reading is available here based on the intelligibility pluralism presented above but also thoughts that we have just seen Pippin himself offer. Briefly, my suggestion is that what is right in the proposal that a fundamental disclosure of meaning is groundless is that the challenge that understanding it poses is not one of testing or evaluating it: that challenge, as one might put it, is not about grounding. Instead, as Pippin’s examples above of the *ens creatum* and technological *Gestell* show, the challenge it poses for us is thinking in its light as a whole—remaining mindful of it, so to speak, as a whole rather than succumbing to darkening—because narrowing—monisms that *belie* it.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> See Pippin’s distinguishing of ‘ontological levels’ in such disclosures at C 65-67.

<sup>15</sup> For what it is worth, I have defended such a view and argued that it is key to Heidegger’s understanding of the challenge of authenticity in McManus 2019 and forthcoming-a.

## 5. 'Poetic thinking' and Hegel's revenge?

I will end by examining another challenge that Pippin's Hegel poses for his Heidegger and tentatively sketch a response, one modelled on my earlier discussion of the notion that LP conjures up illusions of unintelligibility where there is none and blinds us to the variety of forms of understanding that we possess.

Pippin proposes of Heidegger's desire to 'renew metaphysics on a proper footing' that a 'genuine renewal of [the] philosophical tradition ... must involve a new understanding of thinking'—a 'thinking proper to [the] sources of meaningfulness' that the 'ratiocinative, discursive, or propositional' presuppose but of which they cannot 'make sense'; and Pippin suggests that, for Heidegger, '[p]oetic thinking emerges as the crucial post-culmination form of philosophy after the war' (C 12 n. 18, 206, 45). But one apparent incongruity about the above claims is that they are presented in a book which seems to be an exercise not in poetic thinking but instead one at least continuous with philosophical ventures that Pippin proposes are victim of the LP.

Behind the incongruity is a key difficulty: to use terms of Pippin's, that of 'mak[ing] out' the 'bearing' of poetic thinking on this issue of a 'thinking proper to [the] sources of meaningfulness' (C 208, 206). Just as Pippin depicts philosophers needing to turn to the LP in order to make 'sense of why [their enterprises] matter' (C xii, quoted above), it would seem to be precisely a Hegelian move to ask how a Heideggerian attempt to escape the influence of the LP can articulate what it is itself doing without being drawn back under that influence. Most obviously, 'paraphrasing'—formulating a 'meaning ... disclosed by' such a poetic thinking that can be 'expressed propositionally' would render that work 'wholly dispensable, a merely decorative rhetoric for some implied assertoric judgment' (C 215, 214). But what alternative to such a 'making out' of 'the bearing' of this 'poetic thinking' is there?

Understandably, Pippin does not attempt in his book a full explanation of Heidegger's poetic 'renewal', as that 'would amount to beginning another book' (C 208). But he does help make clear how difficult that book would be to write. He notes Hegel's view that art can 'make available the speculative truth of philosophy in a sensible and affective register', but where 'that means in an incomplete and finally unsatisfactory, because not fully self-conscious, way' (C 217). Similarly, it is hard not to have some sympathy with a Hegel who might say of us—those of us having this conversation now—that there is no stable stopping point for us in 'poetic thinking'. We are already *in* a ratiocinative, discursive, and propositional conversation and the above Hegel would insist that our leaving that would

either be our *rejecting* self-consciousness—which does not sound like something we *can* do—or our simply *shaking off* such self-consciousness—proffering perhaps a poetic thinking but ‘without much sense of why’.

To introduce my tentative response, a question: is it inconsistent to assert the existence of a form of understanding that cannot be captured in assertions? For instance, on the face of it, is there anything obviously incoherent in affirming with Wittgenstein that our understanding of concepts always bottoms out in our capacity to ‘catch on’ to a practice—to ‘get’ it—rather than in learning some body of propositions that might be thought to capture the understanding that that practice embodies? Such an affirmation makes no attempt to render that understanding ‘statable in propositional terms’ (quoted above). Instead one might say that it reminds us of that understanding or points to it, directing our attention back to it. Pippin touches precisely on such a thought at C 52, when he talks of ‘trying to *point* ... by discursive means’ to that which ‘should not be thought of in terms of discursivity’.<sup>16</sup> What I am trying to clarify for myself here are the reasons that C’s discussion gives us for thinking that, for a philosophy to perform such feats, it must take on the form of a ‘renewed’ ‘poetic thinking’—as well as reasons this discussion may give us for doubting that.

A natural further cycle of envelopment might seem to motivate such doubt: isn’t my description of the above philosophical ‘pointing’—and why it ‘should matter’—where the need for a ‘ratiocinative, discursive, or propositional’ self-consciousness reaffirms itself yet again—leaving me once again “trapped” by Hegel’ (C 5, cf. 150)? But—to use ‘pointing’ as an abbreviating label for the set of techniques to which Sec. 3’s sketch of a Heideggerian philosophical self-consciousness alluded—could it not be pointing all the way down? (Or is it up?) Certainly, it seems plausible to say that, in making our above pointing affirmation, we are expecting our audience to catch on to *it* too. We are expecting them already to be sharing sufficiently in our own world of sense, such that we can point to the forms of understanding in question and it will be ‘there’ for them to see, and perhaps along with that—if the pointing reveals the relevant philosophical forgetfulness or distraction to have been real—why that pointing matters. Might it reflect again a naïve or narrow conception of our engagement with

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<sup>16</sup> Other relevant passages include C 131-32’s remarks on a poetic ‘reminding’, the passage from FCM 9 that Pippin quotes in full no less than three times (at C 15, 40, and 86 n. 8), and Pippin’s discussion of Heidegger’s critique of assumptions on which Hegel’s *Phenomenology* rests (see, e.g., C 194, 219), assumptions entangled with what the ‘apperceptive’ character of thought might demand (on which, see also Pippin 2013).

ourselves and our world to think that we can do without such expectations in philosophy and indeed metaphilosophy too—demanding that satisfactory, full self-consciousness ultimately somehow rise above that condition?<sup>17</sup>

To use another expression of Pippin's, philosophers such as Heidegger might drive us to consider whether we must do philosophy 'by other means'. But maybe philosophy has all along been done by 'other means', which is to say, of course, that they are *not other* means. Our vengeful Hegel might be right that we have to be able to have the kind of conversation we are having right now. But he might be wrong about the kind of conversation it is. I proposed above that evidence of the inadequacy of the LP need not take the form of evidence of the unintelligible—of the limits of understanding—but equally that of evidence of brands of understanding other than that which the LP lionises; and what I am suggesting here is that we may glimpse above not the limits of philosophical understanding—a place to turn to 'other means'—but the limits of our understanding of the means that philosophical understanding already has, including those we are using now, limits which may again stem from our taking the LP as our guide—here, to philosophical understanding. My concern is not to suggest that a poetic thinking cannot do important and distinctive philosophical work, but rather that one may not have to write and think like Heidegger or Hölderlin to engage in writing and thinking that escapes the LP's vision of philosophical work. The possibility that more conventional-seeming philosophical reflections might do so is interesting not least because Pippin's own fascinating book—taking the form that it does—might require that.

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<sup>17</sup> By way of analogy, cf. Wittgenstein's proposals that '[e]xamples are decent signs' too, 'not rubbish or hocus-pocus' (1974: 273), and that 'giving examples is not an indirect means of explaining—in default of a better', one example being precisely his explanation of his own multiple philosophical methods, their being 'demonstrate[d] ... by examples' (1967: sec. 71, 133).

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