

**Andrew Haas, *Unity and Aspect*, Königshausen  
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To See a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the Palm of your Hand  
And Eternity in an Hour  
—William Blake, ‘Auguries of Innocence’.

In *What is Philosophy?*, José Ortega y Gasset writes ‘that philosophy does not spring forth for reasons of its utility, and neither does it flourish out of caprice...[rather, it is the] search for all things as such,...the capturing of the universe...[the] hunt for the whole’.<sup>1</sup> Why, he asks, are we not content with that which we find in the world without any philosophy, with that which already is and stands there, clear before us? For the simple reason that all that exists and is somehow given to us, in front of us, is in its very essence, a mere shard, a fragment. Observing these fragments, one cannot help noticing, not help feeling, their flawed incompleteness, cannot help seeing the deep scar of their ontological mutilation. Studying any object, you can observe that it is simply a fragment which needs piecing together with the reality that complements it. Even the world as a whole is just a huge fragment that has no explanation of itself. On the contrary, when we

<sup>1</sup> José Ortega y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. by Mildred Adams (New York: W.W. Norton, 1964), p. 94. LINK: <https://archive.org/details/whatisphilosophy00orte/>.

are faced with the world theoretically, it is given to us only as a problem.<sup>2</sup> All this also constrains us to philosophical reasoning. Philosophizing, for Ortega, means the search for the wholeness of the world, which he jokingly calls ‘the Unicorn’<sup>3</sup>, attempting in this way to denote something which we are not given, ‘something completely other, the formally different, the absolutely exotic’<sup>4</sup>. And the search for this ‘something’, this elusive wholeness of the world and its unity, is the most important philosophical problem that inevitably arises before our minds.

The work of Andrew Haas’ *Unity and Aspect* is, in its own deep and original way, a similar attempt to hunt for unity. After all, for him, philosophical reason does not yield that ‘universality of being’ (p. 17), which classical metaphysics insists upon—or even that which Ortega writes about—but ‘something else’ (p. 16), a *tertium datur* (p. 74), an ‘implication’, through which ‘being and unity always already imply one another’ (p. 18). And if, in general, they appear to be the principles on which ‘first philosophy’ directs its gaze (p. 16); then for Haas, philosophizing also necessarily means problematizing philosophy itself—but now, by raising the question of metaphysics, ‘insofar as we remain suspicious of how metaphysics seems to privilege a reflection on being’ (pp. 58-59).

Of course, at this point there immediately comes to mind a comparison with Martin Heidegger, that is, with the problematization of traditional metaphysics as an attempt to question the meaning of being, with its posing of the question: ‘What is Metaphysics?’. However, this similarity is deceptive: if Heidegger asks ‘Why are there beings in general and not far more nothing?’, then Haas wonders, as though responding to the many challenges of contemporary realism (while not forgetting to constantly criticize it): ‘But why are there many things rather than one?’ (p. 372). That is, unlike Heidegger, Haas approaches the question of metaphysics not by prioritizing being itself, but by prioritizing being as

<sup>2</sup> Ortega y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Ortega y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 94.

<sup>4</sup> Ortega y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 98.

unity. This approach to metaphysics—and correspondingly, the posing of the question of being—are, in *Unity and Aspect*, conditioned in turn by the influence of Aristotelian philosophy, namely, by the unity of being in the context of the science of ‘being *qua* being’ (τὸ ὄν ἢ ὅν): ‘being and unity imply one another...[εἰ δὴ τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸ ἐν ταὐτὸν καὶ μία φύσις τῷ ἀκολουθεῖν ἀλλήλοις ὥσπερ ἀρχὴ καὶ αἷτιον, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὡς ἐνὶ λόγῳ δηλούμενα]’(p. 374)<sup>5</sup>. It is important to note, however, that in opposing Heidegger on the question of being—and referring to the Aristotelian formulation of the problem of metaphysics as the problem of being as unity (and unity as being)—Haas sets the goal to, not so much argue for the metaphysical validity of the question of unity as such, but affirm its equiprimordiality in relation to the question of being:

‘one man’ and ‘man’ are the same. And so are ‘being man’ and ‘man’...and ‘being one man’ adds nothing to ‘being man’. And unity is nothing apart from being. Thus, there must be exactly as many kinds of being as there are of unity.<sup>6</sup>

If the idea of the relation of being and unity then, in Aristotle, can be described, not without a certain difficulty, by distinguishing two basic meanings of ‘one’ (an ‘ontological’ one, as unity ‘in essence’, which is the main meaning of one, ‘because a thing is one and possesses being due to its essence’; and a ‘cosmological’ one as ‘causal unity’<sup>7</sup>)—then, in Haas, the existence of such a duality points, first, to the ontological unity of the thing itself, for instance, ‘phos... as our way of being one’ (p. 79); and second, to the cosmological unity of things with the universe: ‘for our universality would be our way of being one with the universe’ (p. 88). These pointers can be traced in *Unity and Aspect* on the example of the

<sup>5</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysica* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), 1003b22-25.

<sup>6</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, 1003b26-34.

<sup>7</sup> Dmitry Fedchuk, ‘Aristotle’s Meanings of “One”’, *Bulletin of Moscow Region State University*. Philosophy, no. 3 (2019), p. 140.

LINK:<https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/smysly-edinogo-u-aristotelya>.

author's references to the 'universality of the universe' back through the concepts of 'one' and 'the whole'; which—in order to avoid difficulties in the theoretical interpretation of the one in Aristotle—relate, in turn, to the prism of Haas' 'concept' of 'unity', and the possible 'senses' or 'determinations' of the latter. As a consequence of this approach to the Greek problem of the one, Haas justifies the importance of the issue of unity (henology) as a supplement to being (ontology). It seems, however, that the author's assertion of the equiprimordiality of henology also unequivocally overcomes Heidegger's principle of ontological difference. Thus, through an attempt to discover a certain way of revealing the meaning of existence, namely, a way of problematizing unity, *Unity and Aspect* originates radically new research paths for Western philosophy: 'The study of being stands in the way of considering unity, even asserts its necessity, or at least the possibility thereof' (p. 64).

How does the author stake out these new paths? What grounds does Haas have for re-evaluating henology? As is apparent from the text, it comes about through an appeal to the philosophy of language; or more precisely, to the intentionalist theory of language (in particular, to Paul Grice's theory of 'narrow intentionalism'). The link between henology and ontology is a metaphysical interpretation of linguistic meaning, and Haas approaches the meaning of the unity of being by studying the meaning of language utterances (phenomenologically analyzing not the 'what' of utterances, but their 'how', that is, considering the latter in terms of the limit of their communicative aspect). He finds signs of this in the problematization of the linguistically meaningful logical connection—that is, implication as a semantic-pragmatic component of a statement-implicature. According to Grice, *implicature* is the non-literal aspect of sense and meaning that is not directly determined by the structure of a statement, that is, by *what is implied*.<sup>8</sup> Following Grice, Haas also refers to the concept of implication, but he attempts through it to think, not language expressions, but the concept of being which is problematized through them:

<sup>8</sup> Paul Grice, 'Logic and Conversation', in *Studies in the Way of Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 24.

‘So perhaps being...means rather being implied’ (p. 27, p. 185). This thesis appears, in *Unity and Aspect*, as a consequence of the reinterpretation of Aristotle: ‘If being and unity *imply* one another, being would presumably *imply* unity as much as unity being’ (26; my emphasis); then, ‘unity is an implication as well’ (p. 13).

For the metaphysics of implication then, unity is described as a path to being, one on which the meaning of the latter is now sought as ‘implied truth’ (p. 72). And this is why being as implied—and not as presence and absence, as before—is considered from the point of view of a ‘way of being’, as a ‘way of implicating’ (p. 24) both individual things and the world as a whole. And then truth can be grasped only as ‘intuition’, ‘intimation’, ‘intention’ (p. 368), as some subtext that never appears (an implicating one), which, in its turn, is implied as the being of things of the universe, as well as their intense meaningful interrelationship ‘implicated in the universe’ (always, however, in its ‘aspect’ and ‘time’), as a means of their ‘givenness’ to each other. Thus, ‘metaphysics is to consider...the meaning of implication’ (p. 35), because ‘being and unity are somehow implied by everything that is and is one’ (p. 34).

Through the concept of the ‘unity’ of the metaphysics of implication then, or ‘onto-heno-chrono-phenomenology’, Haas allows us, consequently, to describe not only the ontological, or essential (one), but also the structural (everything, the unity of the whole, the universal) aspects of being:

The problem of the illumination of implications, of being and unity, time and aspect, may have to be considered not only with regards to their way of being one, but perhaps just as much in relation to how so, and thus how they are one with each other, how they imply one another. (p. 156)

Hence, we can assume that, when referring to the concept of implication, Haas is not limited to the meaning of language expressions, that is, to linguistic and semantic levels of research; but also thinks metaphysically,

allowing for an ontological perspective of the logical—for *Unity and Aspect* proceeds from the structural equiprimordiality of ontology and henology. In this regard, the metaphysics of implication, of course, is also an innovation in the philosophy of language in general, and the development of linguistic pragmatics in particular, and outlines important prospects for their further theoretical conceptualization.

But the question naturally arises: what are the ‘mechanisms of access’ to the ontologically-interpreted ‘implicated’ and to ‘the unity of a thing’ (p. 31) and to ‘the unity of the whole’ (p. 175) and, ultimately, to the very subtext, the implication of the universal, which is ‘not translated into the language of presence and absence, and so problematic’ (p. 237)? After all, for Husserlian intentionality, the field of pure knowledge is exhausted by the intentional experience (phenomenon) of the meaning of an object immanent to consciousness—and in Haas’ metaphysics we are also talking about the objects of the universe, about the unity of being. Here, obviously, it should be noted that *Unity and Aspect* is written in accordance with a quasi-existentialist paradigm, performed in a demonstratively anti-scientific manner, which, undoubtedly, entails a number of consequences. For example, since, according to existentialism, being and truth are revealed not through the discursive cognition of theoretical thought (explication), but in the experience of the knowing subject (implication), the latter, while still remaining an intentional experience, must nevertheless now be considered as going beyond the limits of thinking, that is, as transcendence or ‘openness’ to the world, to the other, to oneself. Haas maintains this stance: he too, like Heidegger, for instance, speaks about openness (‘Are we...open to implication?’, p. 370), calling it ‘being implicated’:

So if being is implied, if implication is its way of being, how it is... it is not only implied by things, insofar as they are, but perhaps just as much implicated in their way of being, or how they are, present and represent themselves (p. 27).

Additionally, the actual (for Haas, ‘in any situation’) ‘experience of being one in or with the universe’ (p. 181), which above all is ‘always mine’ (in aspect and in time), that is my ‘intuition’, ‘intimation’, ‘intention’, ‘waiting’ etc.—this is now the essence of the tropes which, according to *Unity and Aspect*, lead to the problematized subtext, the implied truth (maintaining, however, at the same time the actuality of things too). What is new in Haas, in contrast to Heidegger, is that the metaphysics of implication now allows him to describe openness itself—interpreted in the manner of Aristotle in the form of ‘improvisation’ as ‘self-schematization’ (p. 112)—as a characteristic of the being not only of Man, but also of the thing (since now Man itself is a kind of ‘thing’), and of being and unity. Therefore, improvisation *qua* self-schematization is now the way of the being of things. It is clear that such a view of ‘transcendence’ opens up new possibilities for intellectual research in, at least, those current philosophical trends such as phenomenology and realism.

The basis, however, for the description of ‘transcendence’ and, correspondingly, the modes of access to the problematized ‘*tertium*’ is, for Haas, ‘illumination’ (p. 33). This method is used in *Unity and Aspect* to designate the pertinent ‘way for considering what is implied’ (p. 41)—and the problem itself lies in the fact that the metaphysics of implication, by definition, resists any classical (explicit) epistemological discourse: not only traditional metaphysics, but also science and art are unsuitable as guides to the subtext, since they themselves are already only its consequences, that is, already implicated in it, ‘just translations of an implied unity’ (p. 90). ‘So, our normal ways of speaking and writing, listening and reading, might just be our way of translating them into a language we can understand’ (p. 68), writes Haas. Therefore, he is forced to look for a different approach to the problem of understanding the unknown ‘*tertium*’. This is what he calls ‘illumination’. Its specific characteristic, in terms of our attempt to illuminate the subtext (since a thing also illuminates itself) resides in the fact that this mode, at one and the same time, is both our manner of being one and (amongst other things)

its illumination. This is why, from this point on, Haas calls us ‘phos’, that is, ‘how we are and are one, or how being and unity are implied in us’ (p. 51); ‘and illumination then, might be something like how we can be one’ (p. 43).

Illumination then, is a mode of being, and, as such, is primary in relation to explication as a mode of knowledge, that is, it excludes explication as a relevant ‘way of illuminating ourselves’ (p. 95). So, ‘if we are to take up the problem of illuminating something like our unity, we may not be able to follow the path of any traditional philosophy of the subject’ (p. 61). Classical metaphysics, according to *Unity and Aspect*, does not go beyond the usual ontological categories and epistemological oppositions: presence and absence, true or false and so on, and is subject to the laws of logic, in particular that of the excluded third (*tertium non datur*). However, in experience and intuition, waiting and so on, the metaphysics of implication is precisely revealed in something else, a third, which allows it to go beyond the limits of traditional oppositions and logical exceptions—and this is ‘trust’:

We can make some kind of real sense of the world, or believe that we might put it together in some correct or coherent form, whether logical or rational or not, although this might not necessarily mean that we could trust our eyes and ears, bodies or minds, when considering things... True is the name we give to such a trust (pp. 68-69).

It is important, however, that distrust is no longer seen by Haas in opposition to trust. This is the same trust, but in a different sense: more precisely, now it becomes a ‘problem’ for us, that is, it allows us to approach the ‘truth of implication’ (p. 22) for the first time—since it ‘betrays our trust...the problem might be that it is simply suggestive’ (pp. 122-123). Or, as Ortega would say here, in response to the question of what



the ‘problematic nature of the problem’ actually consists of: ‘the intellect anguished at not being able to depend upon any choice seeks a solution’<sup>9</sup>.

The problematization of truth, therefore, reveals the possibility of ‘suspending the normal way of understanding or thinking about our universe’ (p. 98), in which even the very condition of this understanding, *phos*, can be called into question: ‘*phos* then, as our way of being one, temporally and aspectually, seems to be a problem’ (p. 79). For *Unity and Aspect*, this is how (in the form of suspension or a kind of *epoché*) the problematization of implication, understood for the first time, can only lift a veil over the mystery of unity (and being) as the truth of implication for us, since in this case the obstacles that usually prevent us from approaching it are finally removed:

Then if we are to approach the problem of the truth of implication, of implied truth, it might mean that we must suspend the usual subterfuges of metaphysics, the norms and assumptions, prejudices and privileges, that make it possible or necessary for thoughts to be one with things as they present themselves, to correspond or correlate, or for the unity of concept and object to come to presence (p. 72).

Thus, ‘the problem might be not only determining the implications of unity and being...but maybe rather trying to illuminate implication, an implied truth or truth *qua* implied, as well as the implication of truth, at least if there is one’ (p. 22).

By means of the interpretation of illumination then, using the example of trust as a way of being human (*phos*), that is, by means of a quasi-existential interpretation of human existence, *Unity and Aspect* seeks to enter a new dimension of philosophical reason—the realm of the problematic as such:

<sup>9</sup> Ortega y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 97.

So perhaps illuminating implication, or the problem of that which cannot simply be illuminated...may somehow be that which is most in need of illumination. And the problem of working out these implications could then have their own implications, and problems, especially if implication is neither just necessary or possible, but also what is called problematic (p. 17).

One can say that here, Haas returns to Kant's thought (pp. 364-365) that, if we are given the conditional, then the unconditional unavoidably becomes a problem for us. And the key to the metaphysics of implication lies precisely in the event of the discovery of the problem itself; or in 'the problem of the problem' (p. 359), since the latter as a 'suspension' of the usual ways of implication, 'the ways in which we have gotten used to knowing and thinking about implication, about us, even about itself' (p. 65), returns us to the very (somehow or other) implicating, to the subtext—and 'the task then, of problematization, would be to re-translate it back into intimation' (p. 364). And since 'it might be by suspending such techniques that we get a hint of that which is only implied, perhaps through that which is neither said nor done, imagined nor felt, known nor thought', our ability for self-problematization, therefore, illuminates some of our initial readiness for this—that is, our indubitable implication in the subtext, 'implicated in the illumination of anything whatsoever' (p. 76), our original unity with it, insofar as we 'are implicated in the being and unity, time and aspect, of anything whatsoever' (p. 30). But unlike, for example, openness (as an *a priori* structure of transcendence) in Heidegger, Haas' implication allows us to seek to illuminate even phos itself—and this means that *Unity and Aspect* is an ontology of openness itself, which, of course, on the scale of Heidegger's ontology seems very radical. At the same time, Haas focuses on the implication not only of Man, but also of all things in the universe as a whole—although this is far from the mechanistic '*Alles in Allem*', which he uncompromisingly rejects: 'And this unity would not be in any kind of dogmatically undifferentiated fashion, as when translated

into the language of ἐν πάντα or *Alles in Allem*’ (p. 181). But rather, it might be closer to the Buddhist ‘one in all, and all in one’, or, in Haas’ words: ‘to be would be to be one, and being one might be the way in which everything is and is one’ (p. 26). Thus, the ‘way of being one with this whole’ (p. 175), or being one with the universe, means that even the very ‘universe is, nevertheless, implied by our way of being one’ (p. 173).

Nevertheless, it would seem that, for all its universality, the concept of implication, proposed as a result of the consideration of being and unity in *Unity and Aspect*, as a way of ‘exploring existence’, hardly allows us to grasp its vague and increasingly elusive contour:

Being is not separate or behind things—it is How things are. And unity is How things are one, separate or not. So being and unity, time and aspect, are not present in particulars—which is why they are neither predicates nor universals—they are implied, which is why they are called implications (p. 372).

Yet such features of the philosophical path of *Unity and Aspect* still do not allow us to characterize this metaphysics as purely negative, because as such it is also an attempt—a gripping and reasoned, sincere and acute, provocative and poetic attempt—to find the bearings of such a path. And since, in this case, these bearings are the ‘problem’, Haas’ work could be considered an original research contribution to the methodology of philosophical knowledge: for ‘not trusting the universe...is probably not simply to be taken in a negative sense, nor just a positive one, but perhaps far more as our way of being universal’ (p. 89). And then:

...the problem of something like a suggestion...could imply the suspension of the theoretical and practical...And if such a suggestion is tough to tolerate in our normal words and deeds, thoughts and things, it may mean that our study is on the right track, perhaps insofar as our work is to take up the way in which a suggestion, hint,

clue, might not just come to presence and go out into absence, but imply, something of itself as well as of the universe it implicates, however problematic it might be. (p. 123)

Perhaps we could assume that we are talking here about a new philosophical paradigm, not yet fully acknowledged in the West, but traditional for the Eastern worldview—for example, not concerned with causal, but with synchronous, patterns. Or that it anticipates some new thinking not found in Western philosophy, but whose substance, as Grigoryeva writes, is integrity, multi-dimensionality, ‘wholography’, i.e., the ability to extensively grasp the world as a whole and at every point. Such a new way of thinking could mark the change of the monocentric model to a polycentric one, which, of course, is also associated with a rethinking of the nature of the whole, since the whole is no longer the sum of its parts, but the internal conjugation (implication) of one with the other. Or, speaking in the words of the Patriarch, Seng Chan: ‘one in all and all in one’, not at all the same as Anaxagoras’ ‘everything in everything’<sup>10</sup>. Indeed, ‘one in all and all in one’ results from the ‘universality’ of that one (which Haas thinks as the *tertium datur*), which makes us all united and different. Or, as in the ‘Avatamsaka Sutra’, for instance, this state of interpenetrability is personified in a familiar way: Indra’s network of luminous jewels is an image of the world, and each jewel reflects all the others<sup>11</sup>. Of course, such thinking as an ‘anticipation of another’ also determines *Unity and Aspect*’s extremely innovative style and vocabulary, which (if only because of the almost complete absence of the usual affirmative forms of sentences in the text; which, for the European mentality could be called the ‘explosion’ on the philosophical scene of a radically new metaphysics of implication) actually ‘blows our mind’.

Nevertheless, despite the theoretical complexity of the text and its difficulty, perhaps we could still call reading the work of Haas, ‘winning

<sup>10</sup> Grigoryeva, T. P., *Tao and Logos: Cultures Meet* (Moskva: Nauka, 1992), p. 158.  
LINK:<http://psylib.org.ua/books/grigt01/index.htm>.

<sup>11</sup> Grigoryeva, *Tao and Logos: Cultures Meet*. p. 158.

the lottery’, thanks to which we have a chance to acquaint ourselves with the metaphysics of implication (as a rethinking of Aristotle’s principle that ‘being would...imply unity as much as unity being’); not only in theory, but also in practice—since the work itself is a vivid example of this—while once again, following *Unity and Aspect*, we ask ourselves: ‘But does it not make all the difference?’ (p. 372). And in any case, at least Heraclitus and Heidegger would have answered this question in the affirmative: the former because he found ‘wisdom in knowing all things as one’<sup>12</sup>; the latter because he comprehended that ‘it is necessary to search for and *pass through* some *path* to clarify the ontologically fundamental-question. Whether it is the *only one* or even the *correct one*, this can be decided only *after the going [nach dem Gang]*’<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> DK 50; Heraklitus. *Fragmenty rannikh grecheskikh filosofov* (Chast I. Moskva: Nauka, 1989), p. 199, my translation.

<sup>13</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit. GA 2* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1975), p. 437, my translation.