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SPECULATIVE WHOLE REVISED

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Abstract: How to think of the Whole? Our theoretical findings on that matter emanate from the critical response to D. F. Verene's account of the idea of the Whole, which is speculative and necessary for true philosophy. As this study shows, the idea in its essence depends upon two main criteria, ontological and epistemological. Both criteria perfectly demonstrate the logic of supplementation, which undermines the original conception. We argue that the speculative Whole has to be revisited. First, the only possibility to provide the connection between the idea of the Whole and self-knowledge in a consistent way could be given through the idea of holistic living. Secondly, the Whole must be thought virtual: that allows the Whole to exist in a variety of drafts, exclusive of the one true. Both our theoretical gestures result in a significant convergence of the concepts of the Whole and Becoming.

Keywords: speculative philosophy, the Whole, D. P. Verene, reflection, virtual, integrity, supplementation.

What is philosophy? – a question that can only be forgotten together with the philosophical undertaking itself. Any answer to this question implies both the positioning of philosophy among other human activities and cultural practices, and the inevitable choice in favor of the authentic way of being of philosophy.

In the profound topical works of D. F. Verene (1997, 2007, 2009), we meet a version of a certain answer to such a question. This version is characterized by such a basic bundle: true philosophy-speculation-the Whole. The Whole is a central idea, which is closely associated with speculation. However: what does it mean to be whole? Why should a true philosophy be labeled by the Whole? What is the ontological status of the Whole – is it actual, ideal, or subjective? In our revision of Verene`s conception, all these perspectives of questioning communicate together. Although the conception demonstrates classical aspirations, enlisting the considerable support of past thinkers and recognizing many variants of the Whole, it is rather contemporary. As we will see, speculative creativity and individual life are two aspects that unfold the Whole towards Becoming. The incompleteness of the Whole, which will also be discussed in more detail, is needed to be thought of positively.

The first four sections of our work are analytical and constructive. In them, we isolate the main motivations of speculative thinking: this is a confrontation with reflective thought, as well as a focus on the Whole. Two arguments are designed to confirm the idea of the Whole in its significance. We examine them in turn: first revealing the essence of the ontological premise,

and then investigating the epistemological assumption. An important intermediate result consists in the revealed logic of supplementation, whose consequences for the concept of the Whole are explored in the remaining two sections devoted to the pragmatics of the Whole and its developmental transformation. Thus, the idea of the Whole is subjected to a critical revision from the position of its pragmatical significance and internal incompleteness.

Criticism of Reflection and the Real

Firstly, in a small draft, we should restore the context of D. P. Verene's speculative philosophy in the framework of which the idea of the Whole acquires its basic features. This context is saturated with the meaning of the opposition of two concepts. In Verene's works, the concepts of reflection and speculation refer not so much to the specific faculties inherent in a person or their consciousness as to ways of considering the essence and objectives of the philosophical process. They are neither two parts of a single proportion nor two opposites dialectically bounded. The difference between these concepts is qualitative, it demonstrates certain succession: the speculative ultimately grows from the reflective. Following Vico's idea, "Reflective thinking is a false form of self-knowledge" (Verene, 2009, p. 45), Verene (2009) also comes closer to Hegel who preferred speculation as the true method of philosophy (p. 9).

What is then wrong with the reflective attitude to thinking? What is its drawback? In answering this question, we arrive at the topic of speculation and the Whole. Based on the available text (Verene, 2009), we are unlikely to come close to a multilateral historical and philosophical understanding of reflection. It would be more theoretically accurate to talk about the existence of reflective philosophy (postulated by Verene, of course) and its inherent attitude to knowledge. Such a philosophy relies on the assumption that reality can be reflected and thus known in an unambiguous way (Verene, 2009, p. 58). True knowledge in this case is marked by unambiguity. The followers of the reflective attitude among which the author distinguishes rather heterogeneous figures from Bacon to Kant (as well as the analytical philosophy as such), devote them-

selves to the matching sensible images and judgments, the representation of an object in consciousness and the knowledge manifesting itself in the form of a concept or a judgment. From this perspective, the process of thinking is an endless calibration of the mental representation, its approximation to the true nature of things. Various versions of this classical epistemological approach were examined by Rorty (1979).

Reflective philosophy is consumed by countless debates and the search for the best argument in various discussions (Verene, 2009, p. 47). Reflective philosophy is starting to speak from a certain standpoint, and by establishing it, this philosophy naturally leaves the importance of other positions behind. This remark proceeds with an argument about the real. It is the real that reflective thought is unable to comprehend. Reflective thought deals only with the external, with classification, and the real ends up being what lifeless classification schemes cannot grasp (Verene, 2007, p. 2). Verene (2009) states: "To approach the real through reflection is to see through a glass darkly, albeit with certainty of what is seen" (p. 122).

We must note and remember the point that reflection cannot in any way cope with – the duality of experience. Reflection is unable to encompass and express the human experience filled with contradictions and discrepancies. We shall link this argument straight away with a more general governing principle: "the True is the whole" (Verene, 2009, p. 18). Experience is exactly what presents such wholeness. When a critical thinker, who bases his metaphysics on reflection, tries to comprehend the real, failure is inevitable. Thus, we observe the repetition of the argument and the similarity of the two calls: "to see the real face-to-face" (Verene, 2009, p. 122) and "to glimpse the whole of experience from within experience" (p. 123).

The Ontological Meaning of the Idea of the Whole: Incompleteness of Reality

Once again, why is the real problematized? By the virtue of dualistic relations coming into play: human experience presupposes the duality of truth relative to the existing definitions. Depending on the chosen position, good and evil change places; what is just in one moral world is the de-

nial of justice in another[1]. The context in which Verene considers the concepts of "the real" and "experience" is wide and at its least allows examining the experience of knowledge of individual situations and at its most – an entire worldview or a philosophical system in which experience is interpreted.

Verene (2009) writes: "A poem or a myth is the most precise form of thought in human experience" (p. 74). Reflection cannot communicate anything about the real without operating with or referring to the narrative. There is no such thing that is real only because of itself. This "correlationist" argument, as it is called today, is twofold. The reality of a situation or a thing cannot lie on a single side, either subjective or objective. From the standpoint of the subject, a thing can turn out to be a mere fantasy and from the position of the object, it can be a thing-in-itself, the unconscious, facticity... Each reflective operation communicating something about an object remains fundamentally partial: it only communicates one aspect of a thing or a situation while concealing others. Even if we find a way to put all possible aspects together and match them with one another, we will not obtain a holistic image. The reason for that lies in the need for a principle or even a range of principles underivable from the context of the argument itself based on which it would be possible to compare our judgments. For instance, there is a task – to explain what happened in the battle of Krasnoye (meaning one of the turning points of the Great Patriotic War of 1812). The overall outcome of the situation is ambiguous, and even with all the clarity of the victory, the reflective consciousness can ask its questions. Was it a glorious victory over Napoleon or merely an unfinished operation that cost the lives of many soldiers of the Russian army? How do we evaluate the actions of Kutuzov, the commander-in-chief of all Russian armies and militias, and the motives he followed in not finishing off the weakened and stalled French army? If any such motives were present and Kutuzov saw no point in defeating Napoleon, it seems difficult to call him the savior of the soldiers. The interpretation of both the event and the behavior of an individual does not allow for ambiguity. Here, the principle of contradiction comes into play: we must choose between options. This principle will cease to be problematic when a theoretical consciousness that combines two interpretations emerges. In this case, the "savior of the soldier" and "the one sentencing them for certain death" are different aspects of the commander's actions.

Even if such a synthetic solution is not selected, we have to understand that every judgment is inevitably guided by a certain direction of interpretation. Phenomenology tends to consider the "horizon" accompanying (or preceding) intentional positing. Examining motives for action implies sources providing us with those motives. Personality is a certain interpretation that allows the historical context to come into focus and, at the same time, depends on the interpretation of this context. For the predicates like "patriotic" or "subtle psychologist" to establish themselves as "real" in relation to Kutuzov, an appropriate "Tolstoyan" narrative is needed. This hermeneutic dialectics of one battle reveals the powerlessness of reflection, which is forced to starve until speculation supplies it with pre-made provisions.

Arguments, evaluations, and judgments should be placed in a certain context organizing them, specifically a cognitive narrative (Verene, 2009, pp. 53-54). The philosopher becomes the "maker of the word" (Verene, 2009, p. 32) responsible for "narrative truth-telling" (p. 106). Back at the beginning of his work, Verene (2009) speaks about "the primacy of word over thing" (p. 46) and later develops a logical connective of "the true is the made" parallel to "the True is the whole" (pp. 7, 106). We believe that they can be united within the framework of a single hermeneutic circle of the Whole-True-Made clarifying the purpose, objectives, and way of work of a speculative philosopher.

The ontological meaning of the idea of the Whole lies in supplemented reality. The real is never attainable by itself, it is always supplemented. Being supplemented by imagination, it becomes a dialectical element of the Whole[2]. Imagination introduces an element of non-being, gives some ground for further narration, and guides along a certain path of interpretation. In other words, we are aware of various forms of

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[1] See Verene's (2007) explanation of Hegel's idea of the topsy-turvy world ending the adventures of Understanding in Phenomenology (pp. 49-55).

[2] This train of thought about the constructive role of imagination has already been analyzed in the literature. For example in the work of Solozhenkin and Smirnov (2019).

representation containing both direct sensation and something that transcends them (Verene, 2009, p. 84). This transcendental which Verene calls the metaphysical is the interpretive context which philosophy can never abandon even sincerely desiring it.

If the real has already mixed with cultural memory, the social imaginary (Castoriadis), then the Whole now is a product of assembling. According to Verene, philosophers remake the world. They introduce it to us in a certain way and only they establish its wholeness. In their postulation of truth (shaped in a certain way) they are similar to gods. It costs nothing for a speculative thinker to identify with the Spirit, to declare the possibility of knowing the meaning of history, its eternal laws... Possibilities like this spring from the concept of truth behind the Whole-True-Made triad.

This concept of truth as a whole given through a narrative could be characterized simultaneously as coherent and pragmatic. Verene (2009) stipulates that we consider probable truths designed primarily to suggest reflection rather than be descriptions (pp. 70-71). In that case, what makes them probable? Aside from possible references to common sense or cultural experience, the internal coherence of provisions remains the most important. There is what Cassirer's philosophy of symbolic forms allows and what is forbidden in it. One part of a philosophical system confirms the other, and only the new which is compatible with several known provisions of the system can be accepted in it.

The pragmatic model of truth also applies here since speculation is musical. It can be viewed as a song. However, how does a song become true? The true songs are the ones one wants to sing over and over again returning from the end back to the beginning (Verene, 2009, pp. 9-10). The best metaphysics is a song whose chart position is determined by the number of listens (comments, new renditions). From this perspective, Verene who states essentially continental claims is similar to Rorty who, according to all basic intuitions, is the opposite author. In Rorty's vocabulary approach, truths start to compete in a certain market of ideas. Leaving the truth at the mercy of time and repetition is an extremely contemporary move, some might even call it postmodern.

The narrative model of truth has one problem. When does the Whole become such? Our example demonstrates that one situation is not enough – it requires the Whole as a sort of preceding philosophy of history. A historical event has to become a part of the Hegelian or any other meta-narrative. However, at what point does it acquire its wholeness and completeness? Is it acquired at the moment the publication is sent to print, or as it is included in the tradition, or from the moment of becoming overgrown with comments, opinions, etc.? How many provisions are needed to form the core for further testing for coherence? It appears impossible to answer this question in a quantitative sense. The sum of provisions (no matter how large it is) does not yet provide a system that can be seen in the examples of scholastic theses and judgments.

There is also a structural moment, without which the Whole as an idea loses its philosophical meaning. Contrasting the speculative and the reflective, Verene has to single out a specific method of constructing a thought that creates conceptual worlds. If the reflective consciousness is based on stable relationships between the static I and the independent object, the very link between them is mobile in speculation. Such a dynamic structure is presented by the speculative sentence that reveals the inner life of the object and its connection with the inner movement of consciousness (Verene, 2009, p. 3).

The "Object" of Speculation and the Speculative Sentence

The question of what is this "object" the inner life of which must be comprehended leads us to dialectics. Verene (2009) states: "By speculation, I mean that philosophy that takes the true as the whole and regards the mind as alive in the movement between opposites" (p. 57). In a different place, he writes: "Speculation is a myth in its drive to comprehend the whole and musical in its sense of following in language the progression of the inner life of the object" (Verene, 2009, p. 11). The common in both of these statements is the comprehension of the Whole. The difference lies in the goals and objectives of speculation. There is a natural transition between these objectives, and such a fundamentally unstable thing as the

speculative sentence should reveal the inner life of the object.

Dialectical thought is ironic through and through: when something is affirmed, the opposite is meant. For this reason, it is capable of grasping the human experience. In this task, dialectical thought is also assisted by metaphors that unite things and establish a general context. Holding together many meanings concerning one subject, a metaphor allows for the beginning of thought providing it with an initial alignment of forces. In understanding the features of the speculative philosophical process, specifically its differences from the mythological or poetic processes, a key role is given to the theatre metaphor of thinking. Verene (2009), contrary to Bacon, uses it in a positive sense (pp. 70-71). Its essence will be examined in a different work; here we shall identify only the most significant remark. The etymological origins of speculation are known: it is spying out. However, what is the object of this process? Our answer will be slightly different from the conception suggested by the author himself: it is the observation of *the becoming of sense*.

Are we then not fitting best into the so-called "linguistic turn" experienced by American philosophy and Rorty himself (a tradition that Verene would have called reflective)? The correct answer is the negative one. The becoming of sense is itself possible only within the framework of the unfolding of the speculative sentence. This requirement distinguishes the concept of the speculative: in its context, there is fundamentally nothing external. Another critical difference lies in the interconversion of the two poles of thinking (and the very provision of the need to distinguish two opposite semantic poles). Verene develops his position in greater detail in a different work and one look at it is enough to understand that his logic belongs to German idealism more than to Vico, Cassirer, or Joyce, three other pivotal authors (Verene, 2007).

Verene himself, or rather his logic, cannot lead to anything else – in comprehending the object, we will always come to the subject. Then, the other requirement will also be met: to reach the Whole (or wholeness) in knowledge, it is necessary to turn to the sources of consciousness. As we shall further demonstrate, this epistemological remark immediately turns out to be ethical, anthropological.

From the Object to the Subject, or Nothing External

The Whole is characterized by the process of self-reproduction the main criterion of which is the immanence of thought. Hegel criticizes Leibniz specifically for this criterion: multitude is viewed by him as an external given for the monad which is found either in God or in the mind of the reflecting philosopher (Muravev, 2017, p. 96). The very principle of the multiplicity of monads must be deduced from their concept. Leibniz's system considers the monad as a whole devoid of concreteness. It has no self-justification: how can the difference between the monad of monads and other monads be drawn? This contradiction belongs to objective thinking, which still allows for the external role of the philosopher or the higher metaphysical principle (Muravev, 2017, p. 99).

This is how the completeness requirement is met: nothing external. Our example with Leibniz clarifies this strange requirement to comprehend the inner life of the object. Speculation can approach "the real" directly (or comprehend the "totality of experience") only through the self-discovery of the subject. The speculative sentence makes a circle that is unthinkable within the borders of understanding and reflection – the subject and the object are two parts of a single process that are defined through one another and identical in their difference.

The dynamics of a constant redefinition of an object, a constant change in the nature of attitudes towards the world, things, and events is already a sign of self-determination, self-knowledge. It can be observed in Hegel's analysis of the formations of consciousness, Cassirer's study of the ways of the formation of meaning, and the historical progression of peoples described by Vico. Consciousness with its way of defining objectivity, the indestructible triad "subject-type of relationship-object" is found everywhere. It is important never to forget that for the speculative philosopher, the result of self-knowledge is not their inner world. Speculative philosopher does not speak of themself other than in the context of a supposed global narrative or even leaves themself a modest role of a creator speaking from eternity (Verene, 2009, p. 40). Eternity here refers to the undying relevance of what true philosophy speaks of. Authenticity and relevance

converge again in the pragmatic criterion of truth.

We read that "The description of ultimate reality is ... a self-portrait of the philosopher who makes the system" (Verene, 2009, p. 42). Adjusting for the equation "real = made/supplemented," we understand that the Subject found here as the other side is involved in a continuous self-creation. Similar to a poet composing their life on the pages of their autobiography, the Subject philosopher speaks of their conceptual characters as of himself. If it is difficult to establish a conceptual character, as is the case in Hegel's Logic or "The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms," Philosophy itself begins to speak through the thinker. Verene's (2009) view does not oppose such an outcome. On the contrary, it encourages the possibility of speaking on behalf of eternity in every possible way interpreting metaphysics as a way of self-determination (p. 118).

The subject turns out to be the main object of speculative philosophy which should "instruct, delight, and move, and in so doing to encourage the reader" (Verene, 2009, p. xii). The two main objects of philosophical wisdom are "virtue and the real".[3] Autobiography is the inevitable fate of a philosophy that seeks to articulate the Whole, that is passionate about narrative and not just a specific problem or argument. Such narrative will always touch upon the ancient imperative of "the care of the self" attempting to create a new worldview, an image of the world.

The Logic of the Whole – Supplementation

What is then the logic of the Whole? Throughout Verene's work, we can trace the main motive behind the thought: wherever reflective thought operates and the analytical approach asserts itself as the main one, there is a shortage. This shortage in the need for compensation can be expressed through the dialectical development of several terms making up the conceptual framework of the book. We shall begin with the concept that we previously touched upon the least: one's own finitude is a necessary object for the existential reflection of speculative philosophy (Verene (2009) postulates "practicing to die" as

its canon (p. 15)). Recognition of one's finitude allows discovering the meanings of life imprinted in metaphysical or cultural codes. The infinite needs the finite for its embodiment and the finite is incapable of conceiving itself without the idea of the beyond, the spiritual, etc[4]. Another example is that philosophy cannot be a mere reflection of its era, it must speak from the position of the eternal. Only in this case philosophy can be relevant. On the other hand, philosophy loses its relevance without touching upon the problems and themes of its time.

A speculative thought can comprehend the real ("the inner life of the object") and cannot do so at the same time! We are incapable of complete knowledge. There is no "purely real," it is always supplemented and needs forms of representation – myth, experiment, art. What is the reality lacking to gain integrity which is constantly slipping into the noumenal? The answer is creation, subjective processing which, in turn, needs material. By the same logic, knowledge of the external always turns into the knowledge of the internal, self-knowledge. Reflection lacks speculation to fully carry out its activities.

The logic of the Whole is supplementation. In this specific case, supplementation is carried out dialectically. In other words, philosophy does not always have enough power to be a philosophy! To become such, philosophy has to come face to face with poetry, myth, and music to return to its true business of thinking in concepts after being lost in them for a while. However, as soon as we postulate conceptual thought as the true business of philosophy, we meet Nietzsche and Heidegger for whom the goal of philosophy lies not as much in developing concepts as in self-knowledge and the process of thinking for the sake of the process itself. This reasoning can be continued further: is there any other possibility for the Whole in which the beginning and the end must coincide?

Pragmatics of the Whole: Integrity and Life

Having finished with the positively analytical part of our material, we proceed to the actual critical one. The context will be enlarged beyond the

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[3] Verene (2009) refers to them as the only two objects of philosophy (p. 50).

[4] More detailed elaboration of this dialectics could be found in the research opposing Heidegger to Hegel and Cassirer (Solozhenkin, 2019).

initial conception to test the strength of the existing arguments, to get all consequences from the work of the supplementation principle. Our objections will be structured as follows: to start with 1) a pragmatically unclear (or even controversial) possibility of "the wise speech of the whole", to then emphasize 2) the paradoxical nature of the Whole.

If each individual Whole (metaphysical statement, speculative theory) rests on "true songs" pragmatics in its implementation, then is there, in addition to two internal criteria (ontological and epistemological), a pragmatic justification for the significance of the idea of the Whole? First of all, we mean the supplemental side of metaphysics – the being of a finite human. Are there such "true songs" (as Verene characterizes them) about human Wholeness?

Within the framework of Verene's concept, the Whole is described as a central idea for true philosophy, but it is largely aestheticized as we move to the narrative Whole. And, nevertheless, to be holistic, as far as it becomes clear to us from the Second Criterion, means to engage in self-knowledge. But is this a necessity in our time? We will use several concepts from the region of criticism, both social and philosophical, to sharpen the problem. It is possible that our chosen conceptual characters, trying on the clothes of self-knowledge, differ in less elaboration and scale from speculative ones. But they are topical and timely, their being challenges the very idea of Wholeness.

The individual today and the idea of the Whole – are they not in some contradiction? Putting, following the existentialists, projectivity at the base of subjectivity, do we not finally get just an incessant simulation, a simulacrum of a Person? Zygmunt Bauman (2002) once perfectly expressed this: modern individuals no longer need identity as a kind of anchor. They are afraid of being fixed in a particular situation, afraid of losing flexibility, certain opportunities. They are in a project, in the constant development of a scenario, the details of which can be constantly updated. Moreover, the project may be changed following the mobility of the most modern social life. Between today's situation and tomorrow's opportunities, the individual is scattered, does not need either completeness or wholeness. Simulation is more suitable for forming their credo, since they can always re-describe their being;

becoming someone else at the same time means only "striving to become," repeating existing roles and scenarios without finally, once and for all, exhausting the options for their identifications.

Sloterdijk's (1988) Cynic is even more radical. "Becoming does not need to be stopped!" says his cynic, a successful opportunist and nihilist. The cynical worldview is not concerned with the eternal, paying little attention to what is long-term. A cynically driven person does not consider himself a part of the social whole. This "integrated antisocialist" is ready to be anyone, to make any moral compromise, if the result promises quite tangible benefits. A cynical attitude fosters a vision of being a victim of circumstances (ideology, existing politics, economic structure), disabled in actions, recognizing the impossibility and meaninglessness of real social transformations.

What does it mean to "know thyself" when there is no reference point, when only naked normativity remains of the ideals usually performing a critical function while interiorized? The cynical Spirit is hardly aware of this task: the idea of the whole is aestheticized, realized at the level of a lifestyle. This coordination of desires, the consumer basket, and personal preferences remains the only shelter for the idea of a "personal whole". The social context is lost; a set of normative conditions, that the cynical individual conforms to, persists. For them, there is another well-known opportunity to obtain "wholeness" – death, still serving as a credible boundary for life.

In other words, the apologetics of the whole faces difficulties of an anthropological and social nature. Why, in the era of "dividuals," simulative, partial, transforming subjectivity (described in postmodern theories) – to revive or continue the discourse about the Whole? Speculation could also be engaged in other purposes – take for example speculative realism, which has provocative interests corresponded to the model we are studying, such as the Object (Harman), or Hyper-Chaos (Meillassoux).

At the same time, the very possibility of creating integral narratives of a socio-philosophical character is not denied (after all, this is what Sloterdijk does in part formally). Rather, the question is whether there is appropriate content in this narrative. Is it possible to apply such a

narrative to the theory of the Subject, in principle, to have the theory of an integral individual, without attributing self-knowledge exclusively to the activities of a speculative philosopher? Even if we do not accept all these critical models, considering them as varieties of defective individuality, special cases, then there are several problems concerning the connection between self-knowledge and the whole (in the meaning of integrity).[5]

If the becoming of sense is a genuine object of speculation (as stated earlier), then how to connect this sense with the Subject (or switch from "comprehending object" to "the subject"), with a living human being? Why and to what extent is the speculative narrative about the Whole human-sized? These questions should be addressed to the discourse of Integrity, which evidently pretends today to be the place for the Whole in the dimension of human subjectivity.

Integrity can be the result of reflection on the events of private life, professional activities; being integral definitely requests a kind of self-assessment under the values and moral norms. However, this "can" is not a "should": at the moment of reflection, wholeness (or integrity) is the goal, for example, by integrating various obligations, values and preferences into a consistent system. The existence of such an integrity fully embodied in life, however, is not so obvious. Judging by the existing discussions around integrity, there is no option with permanent and complete integrity empirically. Then what are these points of interruption and restoration of presupposed wholeness in human subjectivity?

Integrity, to a greater extent than individual qualities of character or virtues, requires an exemplar. Otherwise, we are deprived of a fulcrum: integrity remains ephemeral. Someone's life should be an example of wholeness, a starting point with which other judgments about the criteria and degree of wholeness are checked and verified. A close approach to the identification of virtues is proposed in an exemplarist account of virtue ethics (Zagzebski, 2004). This approach is especially in demand because of the specific

complexity of the Integrity, the meaning of which varies depending on the Subject considered.

The moral interpretations of the many types of integrity recognized in the literature lead us to the following consideration: within the framework of a single activity, profession or religion, integrity is quite detectable as a certain ideal of harmonious coexistence of virtues in a personality exemplary for this activity or sphere. However, it is extremely difficult to reduce all these "integrities" to a single equivalent, as well as to find an exemplary human-in-general. Trying to carry out the latter, we risk just absolutizing exemplary behaviour associated with a particular sphere.

Therefore one, single integrity is divided into many, which are divided in accordance with the chosen criterion: intellectual, personal, moral integrities; or in connection with the role performed – the integral behaviour of the parent will be different from the same for the scientist. How does this or that role behaviour lead to integrity-in-general, if it is inextricably linked with the understanding of oneself solely as an artist or a politician? For the sake of such a fundamental role, a kind of cardinal disposition, the person is forced to sacrifice other roles (and therefore related obligations, imperatives). An example is a detective who lives at his job, investigating cases to the detriment of relationships and family. While the necessity of singling out "family man integrity" could be disputable, the detective clearly downplays the importance of the value of close people and family relationships. From the standpoint of some approaches, he also harms his own personal integrity. Kobo Abe`s "The Ruined Map" articulates the consequences existentially: a detective trying to find a missing man eventually loses himself.

What is the conclusion revealed by our explications? From the first-person perspective, integrity remains essentially presumptive. Our reflexive self-assessments gain some weight only if we attest to it, have a certain kind of faith that we have already achieved some integrity or are definitely far from it. From the third-person perspective, wholeness is attributed either to the implementation of individual social roles, or to various groups of personal aspects. And in this case, the following remark becomes critically important: the inference from the wholeness of one's personal life to the wholeness/integrity-in-general is

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[5] Our remarks on the application of the idea of the Whole to the Subject also fall into the mainstream of modern discussions about Integrity. Nevertheless, in order to preserve the unity of our topic, we will mainly use Wholeness, only occasionally using Integrity where the context of the discussions requires it.

not a clear thing (or may be a not valid option at all). Every recipe for balancing integrity of different types is individual for each person.

Such criticism reassigns "integrity-in-general" into the category of obscure recipes. My life and many of my personal manifestations do not imply any "in-general." The Whole in this practical application is a transcendental idea par excellence, nevertheless rather vague, if not useless. Only in the situations of my unique life and on the material of its lessons guiding principles could be derived, recipes on a proper combination of private inclinations and professional commitments, group morality and my own beliefs.

Self-knowledge does not guarantee anything and needs preliminary tools (at least terminological) and a strategy. Various strategies for self-discovery are imprinted in spiritual traditions – Stoic, Christian, and many others. Is it possible to state such a radical simplification as self-knowledge in general? Devoid of methodology and value-terminological markup, it inherits the same problems as the Whole-in-general. If the subject of self-knowledge turns out to be my unique life and personality, my past and future, then a breakthrough to a potential holistic narrative about my Self becomes possible.

This type of self-knowledge distinctive trait is the fluidity of its results and the actual softening, balancing of contradictions. The fluidity of results (or: the changeability of pragmatically given truths) is easily demonstrated on the age scale: with age, my self-esteem, life priorities, and social image will undergo significant changes, but they will not cease to be considered mine. Contradictions can be perceived as differences. Our detective's private life would hardly be compatible with hours of ambushes, but it is not the opposite of his work. Rather, due to the lack of motivation for family and romantic relationships, the detective does not include them in his plan for a holistic living. Although the essence of the profession leaves its mark, a person has the right to distribute his rather contradictory character traits in separate spheres of life. For instance, a brutal and temperamental boxer turns out to be an exemplary family man who relies on his spouse in everything. To claim that we are surrounded by continuous differences in the construction of a way of life is better in an edifying and ironic tone simultaneously - too much can change, and here, in this knowledge, Rorty's Iro-

nist joins the figures of critical sociology.

In essence, and again, what is the pragmatic necessity in the idea of the Whole? Its estimated application could be specified as abstracting an image of a holistic life, finding a personal way towards it. In order to be able to recognize an exemplary behavior that orients us, that is, to identify a guiding exemplar in the Other, to reveal intellectual, moral, and other wholenesses in their specific embodiments. At the same time, we need the idea of the Whole - as it was shown in the example of integrity - for the sake of something else, harmony, coherence, unambiguity, and clarity of being, but not by virtue of its very nature. We resort to this idea when the balance is broken, coherence is insufficient, and clarity has only been demanded. Being born from the logic of opposition and supplementation, it could not have a different outcome.

Many Wholes or the One?
The Virtuality of the Whole

After dealing within the anthroposocial dimension of the Whole, we are located nearby an ontological conclusion. Even such a classic-looking model as Verene's has to take into account the priority of becoming and process. Initially hidden logic of supplementation actually puts into question the entire project: how is it possible - to postulate the Whole that is constantly becoming? This question is contextually related to a more specific one: In what sense are the systems of speculativists completed? Verene gives an answer that is unlikely to satisfy the majority: "Vico, Hegel, and Cassirer are each tragic in the sense that their heroic efforts to make the complete philosophical speech are not successful" (Verene, 2009, p. xxii). This sentence says a lot, being the final chord of the Whole-in-development idea emerging here. The logic of development and the ontological status of such a Whole deserve special attention.

Should the Whole itself be supported by dialectical logic? Although in the thought of the main spokesman, Hegel, three elements appear in dialectical development, Verene (2007) finds the most essential two of them, two aspects of being: in-itself and for-itself (pp. 21-22). The rigor of this scheme is fairly an offering to criticism: in addition to the obvious reductive ad-

justment of the multilateral reality to the dual relations, we should mention the exaggerated role of the negative, the relations of the opposite. Following Deleuze, it can be pointed out that the difference between two things is more primary than the opposite between them. When idealizing the dialectical approach, the relations of inclusion, dependence, union, and others are underestimated. Moreover, if one of the speculative authors clearly emphasizes the dialectics, the same is not so well pronounced in the case of Vico, Cassirer, and other authors from Verene's list. The speculative sentence is just an inadequate or insufficient response to our demand for the logic of the Whole in its development.

The epistemological argument is hardly able to explain the development and dynamics of the Whole itself. Why are we not locked within the tautology of subject and object at least at one of the levels of development of the system, for example, at the level of communication of Being and Nothing? For what reason the whole system could not (or may not) be reduced to a cycle of just two opposites? Hegel's conceptual system introduces a bunch of interrelated principles (Spirit, Subject) to explain inner development. In this sense, speculation, dialectics, Absolute Spirit are parts of one canon, but not of the whole speculative thought. It is obvious that at least some of the thinkers identified by Verene as speculative are not within the rigid framework of Hegelian premises. Then, in each specific case, a solution should be found to the question of how the dialectical restlessness of the speculative sentence (if we still adopt it) is connected with development and does not lead to the emergence of a bad version of infinity.

Another key point consists in the virtualization of the Whole[6]. When Verene (2009) reminds us about the ambition of philosophy "to recreate the whole of things in language, in a total speech, to say all that can be said," then his claim goes beyond the idea of the Whole (p. 25). For the latter to be realized, the Whole must become the One in the Platonic sense. It is likened

to a kind of Theory of Everything, absolutizing individual logics of thought.

Here the incompleteness of the Whole finds its explanation – it is itself subject to the logic of supplementation. In other words, there are many whole ones, as many as there are speculative authors. Each of them pretends not just to the Whole, but to the One, that is, such a Whole that encompasses Everything. Where is such an all-inclusive Whole presented – in the works of Hegel, Vico, or, perhaps, Cassirer? The Theory of Everything fails here, if only because of its fragmentation into numerous initiatives. The speculative Whole is placed in the dialectical game of authors' self-consciousnesses: while one claims the Whole, the other is deprived of similar rights. This is a certain axiom, a prerequisite for speculative creativity. If the lyrics of the true songs are known, then why compose new ones? This question proposes the challenge that must be taken personally. The Whole is rendered like an endless task – ontologically both virtual and subjective. Every thinker tries to cope with the task of expressing Everything, the totality of Being.

Without a multitude of speculative systems, none of them can establish itself. It is not only a matter of theoretical continuity, from which one could protect oneself by going into the depths of the history of philosophy – to some sort of first speculative thought that precedes the rest. Rather, a philosophy that declares itself to be a form of holistic vision must, according to the very logic of the speculative sentence, collide with "partial" thought. And the last may be introduced in different forms: reflective thought, mystical worldview, essayistic wisdom, or even other speculative philosophy. The Whole really needs to be recognized as such; the essence of this recognition can be either a positive assertion of existing claims or a critical denial of them. "True songs" should have both fans and those who consider them an unsuitable genre. Unsuitable for philosophy at all, because philosophy is understood, for instance, as a historical part of the cultural experience of mankind, which simply cannot be grasped in a single, comprehensive narration. Even if the speculative approach is denied, it will only be another recognition of the existence of such a philosophical point of view, as well as a consequence of the subjective and virtual character of the speculative Whole.

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[6] In our understanding of virtuality, we do not refer only to one author, although Deleuze is closest here. The virtual is a middle term, a "synthesis" between the ideal and the real. Inheriting the features of both, the virtual is an embodied, but not completely, ideal model that can be adjusted to meet the voice of reality.

Concluding Remark

In this article, we examined the conception of the speculative Whole, pointing out the necessity of its revision due to the paradoxical nature, for which the logic of supplementation is responsible to a greater extent, as well as a deficient elaboration of the connection between the Whole and self-knowledge.

Despite of aforementioned critical notes, Verene's conception deserves protection under certain specification. Discussing the place and role of philosophy in culture, the unique function of philosophy - of introducing the idea of the Whole - should be mentioned. The number of attempts to introduce such a category corresponds to the number of metaphysical systems. Being, Spirit, Will are markers of a specific statement of the Whole. Whether this concept of the Whole develops (or should it so) into the speculative philosophy in Verene's sense is another matter. Being virtual, not actual, the Whole has multiple implementations. This Whole, guiding the philosophical process and free from any form of possession, can (and should) be redefined every time, narrated again. Pragmatically speaking, we need to get involved in this philosophical process, having a chance then to be a part of the disclosure of the Whole.

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