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Preface

Solipsism is a philosophical view containing peculiar features: considered false in an obvious way, but at the same time irrefutable, it is seemingly as simple as possible, but at the same time it is complex, because there are so many versions of solipsism. Furthermore, solipsism is a minimalistic view, as it seems difficult to recognize a philosophical view with fewer ontological or epistemological obligations. In addition, few take it seriously. All of this makes solipsism intriguing. This book is the result of an attempt at dealing with solipsism on the basis of proper philosophical argumentation. This book, which we are handing over to our readers, is actually our second battle against solipsism, because the first was a conference on solipsism. So far, there have been no winners.

As the reader will see from the very first pages of this book, a deeper analysis of solipsisms generates many interesting and scientifically significant issues in various fields of philosophy and formal semiotics and logic as well as mathematics or computer science, because it is certainly neither a single nor a uniform view, but several interconnected ones. Of course, a consistent solipsist is rather not a real entity as an ideal one, but we know that in some fields the quasi-solipsistic approach has contributed to significant cognitive progress. This kind of research can also contribute to a fuller cognition of other philosophical views in which, as some claim,

solipsism can be somehow included, or when it stands in opposition to them. At this point, it is worth recalling an interesting definition of philosophy by Józef Bocheński, who believed that the discipline deals only with defining concepts and investigating the relationships between sentences.

In light of such a definition, the study of solipsism that we encounter in this book is a philosophy *par excellence*. Very often in this book we encounter the need to define concepts that were unclear or whose meaning changes in the context of solipsism. Also, both the formal and natural language relationships between concepts and theorems allow us to capture many important relations.

It is worth commenting on the authors' attitude towards the subject of the study at this point. Of course, none of the authors is a solipsist and thus does not feel obliged to justify or defend this theory. Such neutrality certainly helps to direct research passion towards purely scientific issues, without succumbing to any ideological inclinations, if we may call them that.

This book consists of two parts. The first articles are in English, and they are followed by those in Polish. In these two sections, more general articles are presented first, after which detailed articles on selected issues or authors follow. The book opens with an article by Jan Woleński on the relationship between solipsism and language and logic. It examines, among other things, the statements of the authors who, while describing solipsism, claim that some of its theses result from adopted assumptions. It turns out that such a result often does not occur until the system of statements is refined. Solipsism itself is strongly connected to the idea of private language, which serves only one person. It is connected with even a momentary change in the definition of a language, which in a commonly accepted sense assumes the existence of some group that communicates using this language. In the article, we become acquainted with interesting logical analyses of the concept of language in the works of several authors.

In the next article, which is the most extensive in this volume, Charles McCarty presents “solipsism for everyone.” Indeed, the author starts from elementary statements reminiscent of Berkeley’s *Esse est percipi* or the Cartesian sense of certainty contained in *Cogito, ergo sum*, but afterwards his analysis becomes deep, elaborate, and subtle, extending to ontological, epistemological, and ethical solipsism. The author points out the links between these types of solipsisms and makes abundant use of logical formalization. This approach gives an opportunity to present existing attempts at criticizing solipsism by means of logical and mathematical analyses, as well as at the meta-level of these fields.

The next article, which is by Wojciech Załuski, focuses on the relationship between ontological solipsism (“only I exist”) and epistemological solipsism (“only I know my mind”) on the one hand and ethical solipsism on the other. The author reflects on two approaches to this problem; first, he asks what ethics could be derived from acknowledging the validity of ontological and epistemological solipsism. Next, he examines which “ethical phenomena” can be in some way connected with solipsism. While the first two solipsisms can be considered to have been unambiguously defined, the ethical one creates a field for seeking new dependencies and creating new definitions. These analyses are supported by interesting examples of ethical solipsism, which we can find in the egotism of childhood morality, in the phenomenon of autism, in the narcissistic demolition of personality, and in various symptoms of egotism. These are only several examples of what is a very rich field of ethical phenomena that can be associated with solipsism and thus better described, understood, and incorporated into philosophical analyses.

Miriam Franchella focuses on the relationship between solipsism and the philosophy of mathematics, in particular comparing the views of three intuitionists: Brouwer, Griss, and Heyting. The abundantly quoted fragments of their writings allow them to participate in their experience of a certain psychological solipsism

(i.e., a sense of separation from the world), often due to suffering. We get to know numerous means of connecting consciousness with the objects of the external world and the idea of analogy in getting to know other people. There is also the world of mathematics, where platonism, popular among mathematicians, gives way to intuitionism. Likewise, there is a place for the philosophy of God, in the description of which some models are also used. Finally, solipsism itself is sometimes treated as a “prolegomenon to any philosophy.” These are only minor examples of how fascinating it is to see reality when the starting point is the analysis of what is directly given and what we can create with our minds in the field of mathematics.

The second part of the book, which consists of articles in Polish, opens with Piotr Łukowski’s work on logical solipsism. At first glance, this somewhat peculiar statement is a way of defining the gap between the reduction of the sentence to logical value applied by the supporters of what is known as Frege’s logic and the actual use of the language in which we focus on the content. The author presents some non-Fregeian logics as well as their formal and semantic properties, which are generally called the logic of content. Next, he demonstrates on the basis of this logic how one can avoid the paradoxes created by ordinary bivalent logics; for example, the liar paradox or the material implication paradox. We learn how the logic of content better captures deontic phenomena, which in classical logic leads to certain paradoxes, such as the Ross paradox and also allows us to avoid certain problems related to the definition of truth. These aspects of content logic which have been selected by the author convince us of the validity of his statement that the transition to this logic allows us to get closer to the real world in a colloquial and scientific way and changes the paradigm of thinking about the nature of logic.

The article by Marcin Tomaszewicz brings us back to Christian antiquity, in which he seeks traces of solipsism in the thought of

St. Augustine of Hippo. For the author, solipsistic threads appear in all attempts at grasping the relationship between the mind and the world outside it. The significant influence of St. Augustine on later thinkers, including St. Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas, Petrarch, Descartes, Pascal, Kierkegaard, and Wittgenstein, among others, makes him a major influence on modern and contemporary philosophical thought. It is possible that St. Augustine has also influenced the development of solipsism in some way, although it was not solipsistic itself. The author examines certain threads of St. Augustine's thought and compares them with the corresponding views in solipsism itself or with those of the authors whose thought may be even indirectly related to this philosophical theory. He finds such threads, for example, in certain types of theories of cognition or in terms of time. It is hard to avoid the reflection that the roots of such unnatural and unjustifiable solipsism reach back to almost every philosophical concept.

In another article by Adam Olszewski, the question of whether Brouwer was a solipsist returns. The answer is negative, but the article presents issues whose solution may be related to such a view. The question of the existence of God, the world, and other people, including other minds, is considered. There is also the question of the nature of the world of mathematics and the world of concepts. In this article, not only the conclusions drawn from some of Brouwer's statements are of great importance, but the terms and their definitions that he uses, which go beyond the commonly accepted philosophical dictionary (for example, individual subject, individual objects, or causal attention) are as well.

It is ingenious to consider Brouwer's name as a term that is individual but not devoid of content. We get to know the definitions and logical relations between metaphysical, epistemological, ethical, and methodological solipsism. I will also mention that some of the questions posed in the article are answered by the author *jain*, and the reader – who I trust will be intrigued by this word – will

be even more eager to learn the meaning of this word and its use in the analysis of Brouwer's views.

The last article, also by Adam Olszewski, serves as a certain summary of the problem of solipsism, but at the same time it is intended as a "preparation of the foreground" for the "final dissolution of solipsism." First, we get acquainted with a short history of the term "solipsism" itself, which appeared in the context of the subjective turn in philosophy, after which we get to know the history of the solipsists, among whom there is a "strong" one, Claude Brunet, and many "weak" ones; i.e., those in whom we find only some views that can be classified as solipsism. After this historical introduction, the author undertakes, in his own words, the troublesome task of giving some definition of solipsism. Indeed, we get to know many terms that try to bring this seemingly simple idea closer. This is followed by a paragraph that is also interesting from a logical point of view, one concerning the presence of solipsistic theses in various philosophical views. This is a good opportunity to practice the ability to determine logical relationships between philosophical theorems. Later, together with the author we wonder what the "I" is, what the projection and its time is, and then we learn some arguments against solipsism. The reader will have a chance to judge for him or herself whether or not they are convincing.

At the end of this introduction, we somewhat waggishly wish the reader to experience yet another solipsism – since there are so many of them indicated – a solipsism of form: only I and this book.

Editors of the volume:
Jerzy Dadaczyński,
Adam Olszewski,
Zbigniew Wolak