

„Analecta Cracoviensia” 56 (2024), s. 63–81

ISSN 0209-0864 (wersja drukowana)

ISSN 2391-6842 (wersja online)

Adam Olszewski

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3069-7518>

Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie

 <https://ror.org/0583g9182>

Solideism – a version of solipsism

 <https://doi.org/10.15633/acr.5603>

ABSTRAKT

Solideizm – wersja solipsyzmu

Niniejszy artykuł stanowi pierwszą obszerną próbę wyartykułowania poglądu, który nazwałem solideizmem. Rozpaczynam od zbadania różnych interpretacji solipsyzmu, jako że solideizm reprezentuje jego szczególną wersję, i ustalę schematyczne sformułowanie solipsyzmu. Po krótkim przeglądzie absolutnego idealizmu rekonstruuę argument F. C. S. Schillera, że absolutny idealizm nieuchronnie prowadzi do solipsyzmu. Opierając się na rozumowaniu Schillera, wraz z moim własnym argumentem przeciwko solipsyzmowi (rozwinęty w osobnym artykule), wyprowadzam absolutną formę solipsyzmu – solideizm. Na koniec przedstawiam obserwacje dotyczące struktury porządku zbioru wszystkich solipsyzmów.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:

solipsyzm, Ego, Datum, solideizm, Absolut

ABSTRACT

Solideism – a version of solipsism

This paper marks the first extensive attempt to articulate the view I have termed *solideism*. I begin by exploring various interpretations of solipsism, as solideism represents a particular version of it, and establish a schematic formulation for solipsism. Following a brief overview of absolute idealism, I reconstruct F. C. S. Schiller's argument that absolute idealism inevitably leads to solipsism. Building on Schiller's reasoning, along with my own argument against solipsism (developed in a separate paper), I derive an absolute form of solipsism – solideism. Lastly, I offer observations on the order structure of the set of all solipsisms.

KEYWORDS:

solipsism, Ego, Datum, solideism, Absolute

„Hegelism is like a mental disease – you cannot know what it is until you get it, and then you can't know because you've got it.”

Max Eastman

The aim of this paper is to introduce the concept of solideism. The term is derived from the Latin words *solus* (alone) and *Deus* (God). To understand solideism, we must first become acquainted with another ontological theory, namely solipsism. The term ‘solipsism’ comes from the Latin words *solus* (alone) and *ipse* (self). One of the striking features of solipsism, when it is treated as a philosophical doctrine, is the notable absence of its clear historical link to ancient philosophy, particularly Greek thought, which is rather unusual when compared to most contemporary philosophical views.¹

Solipsism

For a more comprehensive overview of the history of solipsism and its various definitions, I recommend consulting the works of Olszewski (2020) and Watson (2016). In this paper, I will provide only a schematic account of solipsism. To give the readers a glimpse into solipsism and capture their interest,

¹ For a more comprehensive overview of the historical development of solipsism, cf. (Olszewski 2020). Some attempts have been made to identify Saint Augustine and the Cyrenaics as pioneers of solipsism. However, these attempts are either unconvincing or pertain to such forms of solipsisms that are not strictly metaphysical. Cf. (Zilioli 2022) and (De Solipsismo 2022). It has recently been brought to my attention that in Parmenides's philosophical poem “On Nature” (*Peri Physeos*), the original Greek text reads: “οὐδ’ ἦν οὐδ’ ἔσται, ἐπεὶ νῦν ἔστιν ὁμοῦ πᾶν”, which was translated into English by John Burnet in 1892 as: “Nor was it ever, nor will it be; for now it is, all at once, a continuous one” (source: <http://philoctetes.free.fr/parmenidesunicode.htm>). Another relevant quotation from Aristotle's “On the Soul” (*De Anima*), Book III, Part 8 reads: “For the sensitive part of the soul is that which perceives the objects of sense, while the intellectual part of the soul is that which understands the objects of intellect” (τὸ μὲν γὰρ αἰσθητικὸν τὰ αἰσθητὰ πως ἔστι, τὸ δὲ νοητικὸν τὰ νοητὰ, translate into English by J. A. Smith).

I will first present sixteen terms for (or definitions of) solipsism that I have encountered in the literature:²

1. [S.1] (A. Heyting) S.: = the doctrine that assigns the Self a primary role.
2. [S.2] (A. Heyting) S.: = “The entire world consists solely of my representations”.
3. [S.3] (B. Russell) S.: = “The belief that I alone exist”;
 - a. dogmatic: “there is nothing beyond data”;
 - b. sceptic: “one cannot know anything beyond data”;
 - c. drastic: “everything consists in the following (what I perceive and remember)”;
 - d. less drastic: “I accept everything that is present in my spirit according both to pure reason and to orthodox psychology; hence also unconscious perceptions”.
4. [S.4] (F. C. S. Schiller) S.: = “the doctrine that all existence is experience and that there is only one experient”.
5. [S.5] (F. H. Bradley) “I cannot transcend experience, and experience must be my experience. From this it follows that nothing beyond my self exists; for what is experience is its [the self’s] states”.
6. [S.6] (C. Brunet) “Everything exists only with the consciousness; I wish to say that there is a contradiction in attributing a positive existence to a thing of which one does not think at all”.
7. [S.7] (A. Pastore) “(...) l’identificazione di tutta la realtà, al mio io individuale, consciente e pensante, unica realtà”.
8. [S.8] (P. Foulquié) “Le solipsiste dit: Il n’y a que moi”.
9. [S.9] (R. Eisler) S.: = the view that “daß das eigene Ich allein, das Seiende ist, daß alles Sein im eigenen Ich, im eigenen Bewußtsein beschlossen ist”.
10. [S.10] (S. Thornton) “I am the only mind which exists”, or “My mental states are the only mental states”.
11. [S.11] (K. Popper) S.: = “is a theory that I, and only I, exist”.
12. [S.12] (R. Watson) S.: = “the thesis that one can be conscious only of one’s own sensations and ideas in the present moment”.
13. [S.13] (W. Todd) S.: = “Analytic solipsism is defined as the view which says that all the statements of ordinary language can be translated without loss of meaning into a language whose primitive terms refer only to the mental phenomena of the speaker”.

² The source passages for these terms can be found in (Olszewski 2020: 222–224).

14. [S.14] (Wikipedia) S.:="Nur das eigene Ich existiert. Nichts außerhalb des eigenen Bewusstseins existiert, auch kein anderes Bewusstsein".
15. [S.15] (A. Schopenhauer) "Nach Schopenhauer kann der Solipsismus, der alle Erscheinungen außer dem eigenen Individuum für Phantome hält, als ernstliche Überzeugung »allein im Tollhause« gefunden werden (W. a. W. u. V. I. Bd., § 19)".
16. [S.16] (A. Olszewski) S.:= only I and my Projection exist (Datum).

In all these definitions, or their sensible paraphrases, we can notice the three recurring terms: I (Ego), Datum, Exists; for which the acronym takes the letters:

- I (Ego),
- D (Datum),
- E (Exists).

These basic terms require initial clarification, which will be the focus of our further discussion. At this point, I would like to draw the readers' attention to two key issues. The first concerns the term *Datum*, which is typically used in English in the singular form, while its plural is *Data*. However, we will use *Datum* to emphasise the totality of data and information available to *I*. The second issue pertains to our usage of the term *I* in comparison to the term *Self*.³ In this paper, we use the term *I* in a rather metatheoretical and colloquial sense, without adhering to the definitions provided by any specific philosophical system. From this perspective, the term *I* had two basic meanings. On one hand, *I* is understood as the *Self*. Strawson (2000, 42) provides the following characteristics of the *Self*:

- (1) a subject of experience, a conscious feeler and thinker
- (2) a thing, in some interestingly robust sense
- (3) a mental thing, in some sense
- (4) a thing that is single at any given time, and during any gapless or hiatus free period of experience
- (5) a persisting thing, a thing that continues to exist across gaps or hiatuses in experience
- (6) an agent
- (7) something that has a certain character or personality.⁴

³ I draw here on the works of the specialists in the field, primarily Galen Strawson, Dan Zahavi, and Eduard Marbach.

⁴ Let us emphasize that Strawson identifies himself as a materialist. According to him, the minimal characterization of the *Self* encompasses only points (1)-(4). He refers to this type of *Self* as SESMET (Subjects of Experience that are Single Mental Things) (Strawson 2000: 46048).

This is roughly our understanding of *Ego* in the formulation of solipsism presented below, and we shall also call it the *subject*. The second extremely important understanding of *I* – *transcendental I* – is rather specific and comes from Kant’s well-known passage:⁵

[T]he simple, and in content for itself wholly empty representation *I*, of which one cannot even say that it is a concept, but a mere consciousness that accompanies every concept. Through this *I*, or He, or It (the thing), which thinks, nothing further is represented than a transcendental subject of thoughts = *x*. I. Kant. *Critique of the Pure Reason* (A 346, B 404)

Since Kant’s time, four versions of solipsism have been identified: metaphysical ([S.11]), epistemological ([S.4]), methodological ([S.13]), and ethical, depending on which aspect of the functioning of *I* is considered. The first version, metaphysical solipsism, is the most robust, as the others can be seen as its consequences; this is the version we will focus on. Let us note that there exist philosophical views closely related to solipsism, yet distinct from it, such as subjective idealism. The primary proponent of this perspective was the Irish philosopher G. Berkeley (1685–1753), who acknowledged the existence of things external to consciousness as perceived by either humans or God (*esse = percipi*). However, solipsism – where *I* pertains solely to a human being – does not recognise the existence of the Absolute. Moreover, Berkeley allowed for the existence of many *I*’s. After rejecting the notion of things in themselves and recognising the entire subject as *I*, Kant’s conception (in which God is treated as a regulative principle) can be considered a solipsistic system. His philosophy is particularly intriguing because it can be expressed in the form: $E = I + D$ (phenomena) + Things in themselves. As we will argue below, absolute idealism is connected to solipsism and to Leibniz’s monadology.⁶

He also considers another denotation of the term *Self*, understanding it as a specific person, along with his body, who lives in a particular environment, which is referred to as “Triple-E – as environmentally embedded, embodied, and ecological [...]” (Strawson 2000: 476).

⁵ For a more extensive discussion on this topic in relation to Husserl, see Marbach (2000). Some philosophers even speak of a non-egological self in Sartre and others (Zahavi 2000: 58–59).

⁶ For further examples, refer to Watson’s book (2016).

In his important monograph *Solipsism*, Watson (2016) adopts the definition of solipsism in the form of solipsism of the present moment as central to his entire work:

[SPM]. Solipsism is the ontological position that only one self-conscious being exists in the universe: oneself. (Watson 2016, 3)

[...] The foundation of the metaphysics of solipsism of the present moment: [...] the universe consists only of one self-consciousness being and this solipsist exists only in the present moment. cf. (Watson 2016, 3)

The first definition in this quote describes the fundamental version of solipsism, namely metaphysical solipsism, which defines what exists. In the following sections, we will attempt to articulate the theses of solipsism in the form of *quasi*-formulas. This should not be considered a formalisation, so we must justify the use of these *quasi*-formulas. We will draw on Leibniz's concept of the *calculus of concepts* here, or we can assume that a brief examination of some modern languages suffices. For example, in German, *der Gott* means God, while *das Lob* means glory. Depending on how these concepts are combined or linked, we can obtain either $Gott + Lob = Gottlob$ (a masculine name which literally means the one who praises God) or $Gott + Lob = Gotteslob$ (God's glory). Such 'operations' occur in many natural languages. This happens on the linguistic side, while on the cognitive (mind) side (which is something we believe in and consider important), there is an 'operation' of forming a new concept from two existing concepts. This is where our 'patterns' come from. Guided by these intuitions, let us present the schematic theorems of metaphysical solipsism in the form of *quasi*-equations:

$$\begin{array}{ll} (S1) & E = I + D. \\ (S2) & \neg (I = D). \end{array}$$

The symbol = (*equality*) denotes a relation of conceptual equality or, in other words, identity of concepts, which is understood here in such a way that if something is conceptualised as *existing* then it fits into the notion of a composite of *Ego* and *Datum*, and vice versa. The above schemes – or more precisely, their instances – can belong either to the internal language of the solipsist or to the language of an observer who is external to the solipsist. Of course, for a convinced solipsist, the external observer does not exist, but we are also

considering here a situation where solipsism may not occur, that is, from the position of the external observer.⁷ Let us emphasise again that S₁ says that *it exists solely and exclusively* as a specific composite of *Ego* and *Datum*.⁸ The symbol + denotes an operation with the same intuitive basis as adding numbers or sets. The *quasi*-formula S₂ says that *Ego* is distinct from *Datum*.⁹ The second equation might raise the suspicion that some form of realism also satisfies it. However, this is not the case, since from S₁ one can infer the singularity of *I*, because, intuitively, if $E = I_1 + D = I_2 + D = E$, then $I_1 = I_2$.¹⁰ Note that it is possible to introduce another *quasi*-equation that should dispel doubts regarding realism:

$$(S_3) \quad E - I = \text{non}E$$

Here, nonE stands for non-being, or non-existence, i.e., the negation of being.¹¹ This schema expresses that although *Datum* together with *I* yields what exists, the elimination of *Ego* annihilates *Datum*.¹² The schemas of defining statements – S₁, S₂, and S₃ – establish their meaning when the understanding of the terms (primarily *I* and *Datum*) is settled. The history of philosophy and previous remarks reveal at least two important instantiations of these terms.

Meagre *I* (S_{pm}): = *I* exist *solely and exclusively* as the consciousness of all my sensations and ideas, only in the present moment, that is, *now*. (Watson *Solipsism*, 8) (Hume¹³, Husserl (from the period of *Ideas*), Sartre)

Abundant *I* (S_{sub}): = Only my substantial thinking *I* and the content of my consciousness (sensations and ideas), which are my projection, exist. (Descartes)

⁷ The distinction between the solipsist's internal and external language has been discussed by Ch. McCarty in *Solipsism for Everyone: Principles and Theorems* (McCarty 2020).

⁸ (S₁) provides the necessary and sufficient condition for the existence of anything.

⁹ To better grasp the intuition behind what (S₂) conveys, we remind the readers, through an analogy with the identity of two sets, that $\neg(X = Y)$ implies a disjunction of several possibilities, among which one set may be a proper subset of another set.

¹⁰ This matter is indeed quite delicate and requires further reflection.

¹¹ As Parmenides said: "Being is; non-being is not".

¹² An interesting task would be to find a strict model for these three statements: S₁, S₂, and S₃.

¹³ Cf. D. Hume "What we call a *mind*, is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions, united together by certain relations, and suppos'd, tho' falsely, to be endow'd as separately existent" (*Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739, Part I, 4, Sect. II).

It seems evident that there can be many, or even infinitely many, variations of solipsism. For the sake of this discussion, we will denote them as S_n , where n is a natural number greater than zero. Following the framework of *quasi*-formulas, we can uniquely identify each S_n solipsism as an ordered pair of the form $S_n = (I_n, D_n)$. Interestingly, even with such imprecise methods, one can observe that a certain binary relation exists between solipsisms (or subjects) of the form: subject S_n is weaker than subject S_m (symbolically $S_n \leq S_m$) if and only if subject I_m can do everything that subject I_n can do.¹⁴ This intuitively defined relation seems to be a relation of partial order, since it is obviously reflexive, transitive, and weakly antisymmetric. The following occurs:

$$(S3) \quad S_{pm} \leq S_{sub}$$

For now, we will set these considerations aside and revisit them after clarifying a particular issue. Numerous other variations exist between these two versions of solipsism.

Absolute idealism

The term ‘idealism’ is derived from the word ‘idea’. In the history of philosophy, it first appeared with Plato, in his teachings about ideas that inhabit the real world, while in the world around us we encounter only their ‘shadows’, a reference to his famous cave metaphor. Every philosophical view that bears the name ‘idealism’ incorporates this concept in some form. A second form of idealism, known as ‘monistic mentalism’, originated with Berkeley and Fichte. It asserts that anything perceived (*percipi*) by the mind shares the same nature as the mind itself. Another significant form of idealism is absolute idealism, named for its essential reference to the Absolute. In brief, absolute idealism emerged in Germany, primarily through the work of two philosophers: G. W. F. Hegel and F. Schelling. The key tenets of this form of idealism can be summarised as follows:

¹⁴ For the sake of simplicity, I assume that subject I_n operates based on an unambiguously defined *Datum* D_n . Of course, in more precise considerations this would need to be established. However, it is not a particularly serious problem.

- The primacy of mind over matter;
- The whole is the Absolute—an infinite, spiritual process that encompasses everything;
- Dialectics – thesis, antithesis, and synthesis;
- Thought and being are the same;
- The Absolute is a self-developing spirit;
- The necessity of historical development, meaning the development of the spirit;
- The unity of the individual and the whole;
- Philosophy is the best way to understand the Absolute.

This idealism, primarily its most influential version developed by Hegel, gave rise to British absolute idealism. Its key representatives include T. H. Green, F. H. Bradley, B. Bosanquet, and J. M. E. McTaggart. Notably, while the last of the great German idealists, Friedrich Schelling, passed away in 1854, the first British idealist, T. H. Green, was born in 1836. This indicates that as absolute idealism was taking root in England and America, it was simultaneously fading on the European continent. The following are considered the main theses of the British version of absolute idealism:

- Everything that exists is part of the Absolute.
- The Absolute is spiritual, not material.
- Individuals exist only in relation to the whole, i.e., the Absolute.
- Cognition is the union of the subject (*I*) with the object.
- It is philosophy that leads to the Absolute, i.e., the true nature of reality, not materialism (sensory cognition) or empiricism (experience).¹⁵

The terminology employed in articulating the central theses of absolute idealism is closely linked to solipsism, and, as we will soon discover, this relationship is even more pronounced.

F. C. S. Schiller's critique of idealism

In 1906, the German-British philosopher Ferdinand Canning Scott Schiller (1864–1937) published an important article entitled “Is Absolute Idealism Solipsistic?”. In this work, he examines the question posed in the title and

¹⁵ According to Britannica (2018), one of the three principles of absolute idealism reads as follows: “thought is the relation of each particular experience with the infinite whole of which it is an expression, rather than the imposition of ready-made forms upon given material”.

criticises absolute idealism, particularly in relation to the writings of H. F. Bradley. In Schiller's opinion, "The question of solipsism in its various aspects has a vital bearing on the ultimate problems of metaphysics". He argues that this vital bearing on metaphysics consists in the danger of falling into the abyss of solipsism, a risk especially prevalent in all forms of idealist philosophy, and, to a lesser extent, in realist philosophies. Typically, it is the latter that seek to push idealism into the abyss of solipsism. The structure of these attempts resembles the application of the *reductio ad absurdum* rule; however, as Schiller notes (1906, 85), the absurdity involved is more practical than theoretical. He probably has the following procedural framework in mind:

- a specific idealism leads to solipsism for such and such reasons;
- solipsism is practically absurd;
- therefore, this idealism is absurd.¹⁶

In his article, Schiller attempts to apply this argument exclusively to absolute idealism. He begins by criticising the definition of solipsism as "the doctrine that all existence is experience and that there is only one experient" (p. 86). He identifies two main shortcomings of this definition. First, it fails to equip my *I* with the tools allowing me to question the existence of 'other' solipsists. Second, it is not sufficiently general, which means that the final step – the conclusion regarding the singularity of my *I* – should be blocked by allowing for the possibility of another *I*.¹⁷ This forms the first premise of Schiller's reasoning:

F1. There can exist many solipsists;

Other issues pertain directly to idealism:

F2. Experience (and knowledge) is relativised to the knower;

F3. The experience of the individual subject is of an ideal nature¹⁸;

F4. This is true for every individual (human) subject;

F5. This must also be true for the Absolute Subject because He encompasses individual subjects that are immersed in Him.

¹⁶ Schiller criticizes these methods for their lack of conclusiveness and vagueness, which, according to him, is exemplified by the attempt to derive solipsism from radical empiricism (cf. James 1905).

¹⁷ "Any '*I* will do" (Schiller 1906: 86).

¹⁸ This term lacks clarity, as it can convey various meanings, particularly in the context of discussions on idealism.

The Absolute, like any *I*, exhibits solipsistic tendencies or claims. Is He¹⁹ aware of this, and can He prevent it? Schiller directly addresses this question, stating, “Assuredly not: for *ex hypothesi* that is precisely what it is” (p. 87). He then provides an explanation and justification for this assertion.

It includes all things and is all things in all things. If it can not be said to ‘create’ all things, it is only on the technical ground that since a subject implies an object, and the world must be coeternal with its ‘creator,’ ‘creation’ is an impossible idea. Nevertheless, the dependence of all things on the absolute self must be absolute. *And if it is conscious, it must know this.* For else the ultimate truth about reality would be hidden from the absolute knower, though apparently revealed to the (comparative) ignorance of quite a number of philosophers. (Schiller 1906, 87)

This leads Schiller to adopt the conclusion from the perspective of the Absolute in the form of:

F6. The Absolute must be a solipsist;

F7. Solipsism is the absolute truth.

Schiller then attempts to demonstrate that every human solipsist must possess absolute knowledge, a trait inherited from the Absolute, as each solipsist is a proper part of Him.²⁰ We will revisit this crucial idea later, but for now, we will shift our attention to drawing conclusions from Schiller’s arguments and applying them.

Solideism

As we noted earlier, (Watson 2016) argues that virtually the only version of solipsism that is acceptable is *solipsism of the present moment*. Building on this version, we will formulate an argument that will lead us to intriguing conclusions. Here we gather our argumentation together and present it in the form of a standardised argument, i.e., in the form of a sequence of sentences. The last sentence in this sequence is called the conclusion of the argument, and all the

¹⁹ Schiller writes about the absolute using the pronoun ‘it’.

²⁰ (Schiller 1906: 88) offers two justifications here. The second reads: “The absorption of the absolute and the individual thus is mutual, because it is merely the same truth of their community of substance differently viewed” (p. 88).

other sentences are called premises, and their function is to justify or support the conclusion. Here is our argument:

- P1.** If solipsism S (its version) is correct, then D can be terminated or D is eternal.²¹ ($p \rightarrow (q \vee r)$)
- [**Thesis T**] D cannot be terminated. $\neg r$
- P3.** D is eternal or it is not true that solipsism S is correct (plausible). ($q \vee \neg p$)
- P4.** D is not eternal. $\neg q$
- Conclusion (Ergo):** Solipsism S is not correct (not plausible). $\neg p$.

The entire strength of the argument hinges on Thesis T. We have dedicated a paper to its justification (Olszewski 2024), which briefly asserts that a solipsist cannot bring an end to the Datum. This is because the cessation of the Datum would necessitate an event occurring within the Datum itself. Such an event (the end of the Datum) would require a part that belongs to the Datum and another that does not, which leads to a contradiction, as this would not be a Datum for *I*. Thus, Thesis T can intuitively be reduced to the controversial form: a solipsist cannot commit suicide. The logical structure of this argument resembles a rare tautology of the propositional calculus, expressed as:

$$(p \rightarrow (r \vee q)) \rightarrow (\neg r \rightarrow (q \vee \neg p))$$

For this argument, the conclusion is a statement in which solipsism is rejected. Premise P3 is a disjunction, and by virtue of the rule of disjunction elimination, negating one of its disjuncts will yield the expected conclusion.

- P3.** Either D is eternal, or it is not true that solipsism S is correct (plausible). ($q \vee \neg p$)

Since our main argument has been directed against solipsism ($\neg p$), we have thereby rejected the notion of the Datum's eternity ($\neg q$).²² However, if we take the opposite approach and spare solipsism ($\neg \neg p$), we will preserve the eternity of the Datum (q), and consequently, the eternity of the Self. Then the situation

²¹ The sentence "D is eternal" is considered to be equivalent to the sentence "D cannot be terminated".

²² Careful readers will notice numerous abbreviations here, which is necessitated by space constraints.

changes slightly, and the conclusion we arrive at is the eternity of the Datum. Whether the plausibility or validity of solipsism is even in question is debatable. From the history of philosophy, we know that the version called *solipsism of the present moment* (SPM) has been considered plausible by some philosophers, such as Watson and others he mentions (Watson 2016, 1–13, 43–61, 110–115). Moreover, some prominent thinkers have deemed SPM to be philosophically irrefutable while simultaneously false.²³ This paradox is particularly difficult to grasp, especially in Popper's view, if we consider his falsification principle. In (Popper 1994, 106–107), we find the following theses about solipsism: **S. is irrefutable; S. is false; S. is a silly theory.** From these theses, we infer that there are no conclusive counterarguments against S. An example of a non-conclusive argument of the *ad hominem* type would be that as a solipsist, I could read Shakespeare or admire the Sistine Chapel and regard myself as the creator of these works, since no one else exists but me. Let us note that in Popper's philosophy, if a theory or statement is irrefutable, it is either a tautology or is unscientific. Popper asserts that solipsism is irrefutable and, therefore, since it is not tautological, it must be unscientific. Popper also claims that S. is false. However, how he arrived at this truth value remains unclear. Interestingly, if S. is false, it is falsifiable and, therefore, scientific. Perhaps there is a wider understanding of Popper's philosophy in which this contradiction becomes merely apparent.

Let us return to our main line of reasoning. If subject *I* possesses one of the absolute attributes, then we are only a small step away from attributing to *I* other properties belonging to the Absolute, and from accepting a version of solipsism in which *I* is the Absolute, i.e., God. We will further explore this line of thought and propose a new perspective, which we will refer to as *solideism*.²⁴

Below is a preliminary outline of the justification for this view. Unfortunately, a complete development of the necessary criticisms and addressing the gaps in the premises must be postponed, as this will require a more thorough treatment in a separate, more extensive paper.

²³ These included Russell, Santayana, Watson, and others. Popper argued that solipsism was false and irrefutable. The English absolute idealist F. H. Bradley devoted chapter XXI of his major work *Appearance and Reality* to solipsism, where he wrote: "Solipsism is quite false. But from its errors we may collect aspects of truth, to which we sometimes are blind" (p. 260). He also thought that SPM is irrefutable.

²⁴ This name is not accidental. Its formation is similar to *solipsism* (*solus* – *ipse*), thus we have *solideism* (*solus* – *Deus*).

- P1. If solipsism S (its version) is correct, then D will be terminated or D is eternal.
- [Thesis T] D will not be terminated.
- P3. D is eternal or it is not true that solipsism S is correct.
- P2. S is *irrefutable* (Popper).
- P2.1. There are no *conclusive counter-arguments* against S.
- P2.2. Solipsism is correct (plausible).
- P4. D is eternal.
- P5. The *Self* must be the Absolute. (P3., P2., and P4.)²⁵
- F6. The Absolute must be a solipsist. (Schiller 1906, 87)
- F7. Solipsism is the absolute truth. (Schiller 1906, 87)
- AO1. *Solideism*: =_{df} Absolute Solipsism. (Olszewski)
- AO2. *Quasi*-equations that characterise *Solideism* use the following symbols:
- $S_{\text{solideism}} = (\text{Deus (Absolute); Universum (creation)})$:
- (S1) $E_{\text{solideism}} = I_{\text{solideism}} (\text{Deus}) + D_{\text{solideism}} (\text{Universum})$.
- (S2) $I_{\text{solideism}} (\text{Deus}) \neq D_{\text{solideism}} (\text{Universum})$.

As we can see, solideism falls within our *quasi*-equations that characterise the general equation for solipsism. The key difference lies in the interpretations of D (Datum) and I (Ego). Equation S2 ensures that solideism is not confused with pantheism – a concern also in related views, such as idealism – making it a distinctive and unique feature of our view. Statements FS1 and FS2 are derived from an important work by F. C. S. Schiller (1906, 87–88), in which he criticises Bradley’s absolute idealism by deriving what he deems absurd conclusions from its principles, which closely resemble FS1 and FS2 and essentially define solideism. Let us observe that human solipsism is an ontological consequence of solideism (as solideism itself is an ontological view).

The structure of a set of solipsisms

Returning to the considerations regarding the family of all solipsisms, which we will denote by the uppercase Greek letter Σ , let us recall that this family is partially ordered by the following binary relation:

²⁵ Regarding premises F6 and F7, see the section dedicated to the philosophy of F. C. S. Schiller.

“ S_n is weaker than S_m ” ($S_n \leq S_m$):= Subject I_m , based on D_m , can do everything that subject I_n can do based on D_n .

This binary relation (defined above) possesses the properties of reflexivity, transitivity, and weak antisymmetry. In our notation, we express this as follows:

- $S_n \leq S_n$ (reflexivity)
- If $S_n \leq S_m$ and $S_m \leq S_p$, then $S_n \leq S_p$ (transitivity)
- If $S_n \leq S_m$ and $S_m \leq S_n$, then $S_n = S_m$ (weak antisymmetry)

We have allowed for an infinite number of solipsisms, although there is no compelling argument for this. A natural question that arises in such a context is whether this structure contains both a greatest and a least element. The answer to the first question is straightforward because, for obvious reasons, $S_{\text{solideism}} = (\text{Deus (Absolute); Universum (creation)})$ is the greatest element, as this follows directly from our understanding of $I_{\text{solideism}}$ and $D_{\text{solideism}}$. However, the question of whether a least element exists in this structure remains unresolved. Here, we offer a tentative proposal, though it is somewhat controversial. It is known from studies on Turing’s work that one of his motives for developing the famous Turing machine was his inquiry into the possibility of human existence after death. The machine was designed as a sort of model for the human subject.²⁶ In (Olszewski 2024), it was shown with greater precision that Turing’s concept of the subject can be reduced to a solipsistic schema and is, in essence, solipsistic. We will denote Turing’s solipsistic subject in our notation as:

- Turing’s solipsism – $S_{\text{Turing}} = (I_{\text{Turing}} (\text{universal Turing machine}); D_{\text{Turing}} (\text{infinite tape}))$.

After this brief presentation, we can answer the question about the least element in the described structure. The least element is S_{Turing} . Hence, the following relations arise:

- A. For every n , $S_n \leq S_{\text{solideism}}$
- B. For every n , $S_{\text{Turing}} \leq S_n$
- C. $S_{\text{Turing}} \leq S_{\text{solideism}}$.

From these statements and S_3 , we can derive the following conclusions:

- D. $S_{\text{Turing}} \leq S_{\text{pm}}$
- E. $S_{\text{sub}} \leq S_{\text{solideism}}$.

²⁶ Cf. (Olszewski 2009).

The statement in point C is a rather special assertion. Its truth depends on accepting Church's thesis, which implies that, in principle – setting aside limitations related to time, space for recording computations, and the speed of calculations – humans can compute everything that a Turing machine can compute. In the work (Olszewski 2009), we proposed to call such an idealised human a *transcendental subject*, and it is possible that for such a subject, Church's thesis is true. However, a specific human being, with all his limitations, was called an *empirical subject*, and for him Church's thesis is evidently false. Finally, a *Platonic subject* – the Absolute – was distinguished, for whom Church's thesis is also false.

Some may be deterred from embracing the concept of solideism due to the prevalent negative opinion, or even prejudice, regarding solipsism among philosophers.²⁷ This work seeks to reclaim the rightful, though often overlooked, position of solipsism in philosophy.²⁸

²⁷ Cf. (Schiller 1906) and (Bradley 1916: chapter XXI).

²⁸ Cf. (Watson 2016).

REFERENCES

- Bradley, F. H. (1916). *Appearance and reality: a metaphysical essay*. London: G. Allen. Sixth Impression (corrected).
- Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. Absolute Idealism. In *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 30 Oct. 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Absolute-Idealism>. Accessed 23.09.2024.
- Dadaczyński, J., Olszewski, A., & Wolak, Z. (Eds.). (2000). *De Solipsismo*. Kraków: Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie Wydawnictwo Naukowe. <https://doi.org/10.15633/9788374389303.10>.
- Franchella, M. (1995). Like a Bee on a Windowpane: Heyting's Reflections on Solipsism, *Synthese*, 105, 207–251. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01064219>.
- Halbfaß, W. (1968). *Descartes' Frage nach der Existenz der Welt*. Meisenheim am Glan: Anton Hain.
- Hume, D. (1888). *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Web-Books.com. <https://www.web-books.com/ON/B1/E1053R0429/TOC.html>. Accessed 09.01.2020.
- James, W. (1905). Is Radical Empiricism Solipsistic? *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, 2(9), 235–238. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2011706>.
- Kant, I. (1998). *Critique of Pure Reason* (P. Guyer, A. W. Wood, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Marbach, E. (2000). The place for an ego in current research. In D. Zahavi (Ed.), *Exploring the self: philosophical and psychopathological perspectives on self-experience* (pp. 75–96). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- McCarty, D. Ch. (2020). Solipsism for Everyone: Principles and Theorems. In: J. Dadaczyński, A. Olszewski, Z. Wolak (Eds.). *De Solipsismo* (pp. 33–86). Kraków: Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie Wydawnictwo Naukowe. <https://doi.org/10.15633/9788374389303.10>.
- Odifreddi, P. (1989). *Classical Recursion Theory* (vol. 1). Amsterdam: North-Holland.
- Olszewski, A. (2009). *Teza Churcha. Kontekst historyczno-filozoficzny*, Kraków: Universitas.
- Olszewski, A. (2020). Solipsyzm i różne sprawy. In J. Dadaczyński, A. Olszewski, Z. Wolak (Eds.). *De Solipsismo* (pp. 215–244). Kraków: Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie Wydawnictwo Naukowe. <https://doi.org/10.15633/9788374389303.10>.
- Olszewski, A. (2024). The philosophy of the end, or can a solipsist end his life?, *forthcoming*.
- Popper, K. R. (1994). *Knowledge and the Body-Mind Problem: In Defence of Interaction*. London: Routledge.

- Russell, B. (1948). *Human knowledge, its scope and limits*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Schiller, F. C. S. (1906). Is Absolute Idealism Solipsistic? *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, 3(4), 85–89.
- Strawson, G. (2000). The phenomenology and ontology of the self. In D. Zahavi (Ed.), *Exploring the self: philosophical and psychopathological perspectives on self-experience* (pp. 23–39). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Watson, R. (2016). *Solipsism. The Ultimate Empirical Theory of Human Existence*, South Bend: St. Augustine's Press.
- Zahavi, D. (2000). Self and consciousness. In D. Zahavi (Ed.), *Exploring the self: philosophical and psychopathological perspectives on self-experience* (pp. 55–74). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Zilioli, U. (2022). The (Un)bearable Lightness of Being. The Cyrenaics on Residual Solipsism. *Peitho. Examina Antiqua*, 13(1), 65–81. <https://doi.org/10.14746/PEA.2022.1.4>.

