

# Solipsism, Physical Things and Personal Perceptual Space

*Solipsist Ontology, Epistemology and Communication*

SERIES IN PHILOSOPHY

*At first sight, it seems hard to bring together the terms like solipsism and ontology in a phrase like “solipsist ontology”. Ontology is said to be interested in what is and is not “there” and the term “there” seems to imply “what is there independently of a knowing subject”. On the contrary, according to solipsism, only existence of the self can be grounded and if the latter claim can be achieved it is open to discussion. Ural in this study is boldly tackling this aporia. Extending the claims of solipsism to the end, he claims that it is quite possible to develop a form of solipsist ontology. Relying on the existence-giving acts of consciousness he considers existence as a relation between a thing and a field of existence, which he terms as a Ural Space. Ural Spaces do not assume substances or classical identities but are constituted upon relations. In this context, objectivity is grounded upon communicability of relations. I believe that Ural’s book is a brave and original contribution to the contemporary discussions of ontology.*

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## Summary

Solipsism indicates an epistemological position that denies the existence of ‘others’ by asserting that the ‘self’ is the only thing that can be known to exist. For sophist philosophers, the belief that “we can not know anything, and even if we do so, we cannot communicate it” is central to this theory.

However, until now there has been little academic scholarship that has tried to provide answers to the pressing issues raised by solipsism. In *Solipsist Ontology: Physical Things and Personal Perceptual Space*, Ural aims to redefine solipsism by analyzing and elaborating on traditional philosophical problems, such as empiricism and rationalism, as well as discussing problems of language, communication, and meaning. Ural reveals where solipsism has been previously ignored, pseudo-problems have arisen that disguise the sources of the problems with prejudices that concern the philosophical problems in question. Notably, many current, as well as traditional problems of ontology, epistemology, and language are bound up in discourses of solipsism.

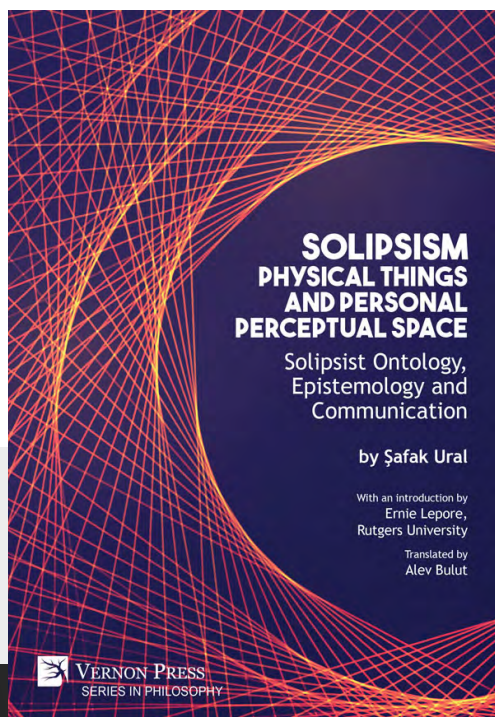
Ural argues that discarding solipsism as a philosophical discourse hinders new interpretations of traditional philosophical thought. This book offers a fresh perspective to solipsism by defining

it in relation to concepts such as ‘physical things,’ ‘personal perceptual space’ and ‘identity.’ Importantly, Ural proposes that an understanding of ‘identity’ is not necessary in order to redefine solipsism. By building a logical system that fashions communication and solipsism as interrelated, it is possible to reject ‘identity’ as a useless concept and thus overcome the classic solipsist dilemma of “we are not able to communicate.”

This original piece of research is an important and timely contribution to the field of philosophy that will be of great interest to teachers, researchers, and students.

## About the author

**Prof. Dr. Hayri Şafak Ural** graduated with a degree in Philosophy from Ankara University in 1971. After completing his studies, he continued his academic career at Istanbul University where he worked in the Department of Systematic Philosophy. In 1978 he received his doctorate for his thesis, “An Essay on the Determination of the Simplicity Principle in Positive Science”. Since finishing his doctoral thesis, Ural has worked as a visiting professor in Austria (Vienna and Innsbruck), the USA (Rutgers), Hungary (Budapest) and various universities in Istanbul. Attending many international conferences in the USA, Brazil, India and Singapore has allowed Ural to further develop his theses on solipsism. He is the founder of the Department of Logics at Istanbul University and the Turkish Logic Society. He is also responsible for organizing several international conferences at Istanbul University.



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