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“Mundane and transcendental intersubjectivity in schizophrenia”

Abstract

Schizophrenia has long been described and studied as a disorder of the self. What I aim for in this presentation is to show that a too narrow concept of the self does not suffice to grasp the complex phenomenology of schizophrenia. I will argue that an essential element of the schizophrenia involves intersubjectivity, and I suggest that this is not a secondary phenomenon. To clarify this idea, I investigate the disturbances of intersubjectivity. I distinguish between two kinds of intersubjectivity: The first kind concerns encounters with others-as-constituted, and it can be called ‘mundane intersubjectivity’. It involves disturbances in the realm of immediate contact, such as the famous ‘praecox feeling’, the alleged incomprehensibility, and schizophrenic autism and social withdrawal. The second kind of intersubjectivity can be called ‘transcendental intersubjectivity’, and it involves others as co-constituting a shared world. I will show how delusions and hallucinations are manifestations of disturbed transcendental intersubjectivity. To conclude my presentation, I will speculate on the nature of the self-disorder in schizophrenia and I will suggest to use the term ‘open subjectivity’ to designate what kind of self is actually disturbed.