

# PSYCHOSIS, LONELINESS AND IDENTITY

Dutch ISPS Seminar – 15 March 2010 – Dolhuys Haarlem

*This wanderer goes through life alone. He touches the ground only 1 by 1 by 1 inch. He is carrying windmills and is protecting his violin, his books, his plant, his kitchenware and his cat carefully inside his coat. He limits his view to what is in front of him.*

*Where are the others? They are not there. He continues his journey alone through a dark forest, carefully maintaining a delicate balance.*

*What made him adopt this lifestyle? Did he have unpleasant experiences with the others or is it simply his nature? What could be the benefit of this way of living? These are the themes around which the ISPS network Netherland Flanders organize their new conference day.*

*Psychosis, loneliness and identity, Is there a connection between them? And if so, what would that connection be?*



El Vagabundo.cat 189, Remedios Varo, Catalogue Raisonne, Walter Gruen, Singa

The subject is not new. On the contrary, Murray Bowen did talk about a psychosis as a lack of differentiation. Eric Erikson thought that a severe identity crisis could be the beginning of a psychosis.

‘Being there’ was the remedy for the person in crisis.

This subject was during the decades of the brain a forbidden one. But now, brain research has revealed that the brain is constantly being [de]formed by [lack of] experiences.

Epidemiological research suggests that growing up in a socially defragmented neighborhood is a risk factor. Why does the first psychosis so often start on the threshold of adulthood?

While in psychiatry researchers looked for missing neurotransmitters, social psychologists were investigating what adolescents need to develop into resilient adults, and the effects of loneliness. Also there was, in hidden areas inside psychiatry renewed interest for the relationship between self and others and psychosis. Now is the time that different lines of investigation connect. The ISPS invites you to take the first steps with the speakers towards this on the conference on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2010 in the Dolhuys in Haarlem, the Netherlands

## Speakers:

- Josef Parnas
- Wouter Kusters
- David Fowler
- Inez Germeys
- Anna Lichtwarck-Aschoff
- Rudy Vandenborre

## Speakers Bio's:

- Josef Parnas, professor of the University of Copenhagen, He works at the centre of subjectivity research. He wrote about the self in schizophrenia, illuminated by a series of systematic empirical studies with phenomenological orientation
- Wouter Kusters, linguist and philosopher. He experienced psychoses himself. He wrote books and articles on the changed meaning of space, time and language in a psychosis.
- David Fowler, from the CBT school, professor of the university of East Anglia in GB. He investigated self and other concepts in psychosis.
- Inez Germeys, senior researcher of the University of Maastricht. She prospectively researched on which adolescents with minor symptoms turned out to have a full blown psychosis later on. She investigated the relationship between stress and psychotic symptoms using 'the experience sampling method'.
- Anna Lichtwarck-Aschoff, researcher at the department Family and Behavior of the faculty of social science on the University of Nijmegen. She researches normal adolescent development and made a dissertation on what for effect conflicts between mother and daughters had on identidevelopment of the latter.
- Rudy Vandenborre, Poet, Psychologist and psychotherapist, de Kade UPC-KUL campus Kortenberg, a clinic for adolescents. Some of the patients are suffering from a psychotic breakdown. Psychoanalyst on the Belgian school for Psychoanalysis

### Chair: Arend Jan Heerma van Voss

He was editor of the Dutch Journal for Mental Health

He will ask questions like:

- What do adolescents need in order to develop a resilient identity?
- Which role does loneliness play in identity formation?
- Can a strong identity offer protection against psychosis?
- How does that relate to the influence of stress on psychosis?
- Can a psychosis have a benevolent effect on identity formation? Can family members and friends promote this?
- Can a person, prone to psychosis, change his prospect by changing his relation with others?

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