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Book Review:

Jerzy Zadecki “The Self in Early Schizophrenia” (“Ja we wczesnej schizofreni”)

Jagiellonian University Press, Kraków 2015, 1st Edition

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The personal context of a schizophrenic crisis has recently attracted more attention both among psychotherapists and contemporary clinicians. Dr Zadecki’s book *The Self in Early Schizophrenia* fits in perfectly with this framework. Published in 2015, the book is based on Zadecki’s doctoral dissertation from 1972, *Emotional disorders in early schizophrenia: Pursuits, desires, values, self-image and relationships with others*.

The author is a graduate of Jagiellonian University Medical College in Krakow. Prior to his emigration to the US in the 80s, as an assistant professor at the Krakow Psychiatric Clinic, he was in charge of early schizophrenia therapy. In the Unites States, he worked at Loyola University Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry. In autumn 2014, he returned to Poland and began professional collaboration with the Section of Community Psychiatry at the Faculty of Psychiatry of the Collegium Medicum, Jagiellonian University.

The introduction to *The Self in Early Schizophrenia* lays out the book’s subject matter and discusses its origin. The book, the sum of the author’s professional experience gained on both continents, is an effort to fill the need for the phenomenological analysis of early schizophrenia. The original dissertation came into being in the days when the author – in his own words – “was discovering the world of schizophrenia”. It has “a universal value that resists the passage of time”. The original work has now been enriched for the reflections of recent years, while phenomenological interpretation has been thoroughly revised.

“The complexities of the topic: An introduction”, the first of the book’s seven chapters, familiarises the reader with phenomenology in schizophrenia and traces its evolution up until its recent renaissance. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how contemporary psychotherapy is applied in treating schizophrenia. Chapter 2 discusses the study’s objectives, methodology, and subject characteristics. The next chapter introduces the reader to the world of schizophrenia patients, symbolically

represented by Adam and Eve. This is an in-depth discussion of two clinical cases, presenting systematically some preliminary observations, based on information provided by patients themselves as well as by their families that helps order chronologically the first phase of schizophrenia. Each case concludes with a preliminary analysis of the patient's history, followed by an eidetic analysis based on the characteristics of the entire pool of cases. This allows the author to identify several significant themes. However, in his own words, the analysis of the material is "far from explaining, interpreting, or allowing conclusions". The subjective experiences of the patients are described in several dozen pages. Next, the author analyses horizontally the clinical material, all aspects of which have their place and significance. The subjective perspective captures the fundamental existential disorder of the patient. The foregoing chapters allow the author to distinguish in Chapter 6 seven forms of disorders of the self, a category of "Being-in-the-world" akin to Heidegger's *Dasein*, observable in early-stage schizophrenia. Thus, the phenomena previously discussed in isolation find an integrated and coherent expression. In the last chapter of the book, Dr Zadecki recounts the origins of his study – research done in the 70s of the 20th century, subsequent course of his doctoral dissertation as well as his recent reflections.

The book provides a bilingual synopsis, an extensive bibliography, the afterword, inclusive of conclusions drawn in the original from the author's doctoral dissertation.

In sum, this cutting-edge publication makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the patient, in both the intellectual and emotional dimension, an all-too-rare achievement in recent times, and all the more significant for it. Additionally, the study's phenomenological perspective offers psychotherapists a valuable tool as well as educating health professionals working with the schizophrenic patient.

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