

Book review

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Title: Hallucinations in Psychoses and Affective Disorders A Clinical and Biological Approach

Editors: Paolo Brambilla, Massimo Carlo Mauri, Alfredo Carlo Altamura

ISBN: 978-3-319-75123-8

eBook ISBN: 978-3-319-75124-5

Publisher: Springer International Publishing AG 2018

Number of Pages: XIII, 208

Hallucinations have long attracted attention of psychiatrists, mental health professionals, but also of non-professionals. They quickly became one of the most discerning features of psychiatric patients, leading to numerous generalizations and often-reducing otherwise abundant symptomatology to what was thought to be its most prominent feature. Same could be said about schizophrenia, as a prototype psychiatric disorder, in which hallucinations and delusions rank highest among a myriad of symptoms. That was not the case a century ago when schizophrenia was conceptualized, but it certainly does reflect our fascination with hallucinations as a feature of schizophrenia. At this point, I have to state the obvious fact that hallucinations are not specific to schizophrenia, or even to psychiatry for that matter. This observation, as

simple as it is, was not necessarily reflected in medical literature, especially outside the field of psychiatry. Furthermore, clinical and biological perspective was often lacking or too fragmented to allow clearer insight into the complex processes that lead to forming of hallucinations. I am glad to say that this book - *Hallucinations in Psychoses and Affective Disorders* addresses this issue in a comprehensive approach to a trans-diagnostic symptom. It does so through three distinct parts, first one of which deals with molecular mechanisms involved in substance-induced hallucinations, focusing on three key pathways we now know are important in hallucination forming, namely dopamine, serotonin and glutamate pathways. This first part of the book also gives a detailed description of hallucinatory symptomatology across substance-induced disorders, psychotic disorders and various neurological diseases. By doing so, it succeeds in presenting hallucinations as a relatively common and frequent symptom that can occur in a number of different illnesses and disorders. Through the second part, recent genetic, neurochemical and neuroimaging data outlining hallucinations are presented, with a special focus on auditory-verbal hallucinations that have a potential genetic basis. The book concludes with its third part, which

focuses on pharmacology and treatment of hallucinations, including magnetic and electric stimulation. In a detailed manner, authors attempted to present the current body of knowledge that suggests neuroplasticity modulation effects of transcranial direct current stimulation, along with current limitations of that approach. Comprised of 12 chapters and totalling at 208 pages, this resource is both comprehensive enough to

be considered a textbook of hallucinations and at the same time a brief enough professional read. These features make this book a praiseworthy resource and of great help to all the professionals in the field of mental health, and all of those that are caring and treating patients suffering from hallucinations.

Assistant professor Vjekoslav Peitl, MD, PhD

Title: Clinical Cases in Psychiatry: Integrating Translational Neuroscience Approaches'

Editors: Alfredo Carlo Altamura, Paolo Brambilla

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Number of Pages: VIII, 293

Translational medicine came out in the last years as one of the latest and most comprehensive endeavors of the biomedical field attempting to get us through the prickly road where science strives to hold hands to everyday medical practice and to find specific and precise answers which would get us to the aimed personalized medicine. Personalized medicine means we could treat a person by respecting and emphasizing his or her specifics and giving a person the pinpoint treatment he or she needs. It obligates us to get to the synthesis of everything from 'benchside to bedside' in the process of colouring an improved picture of the illnesses, especially in the era of upsurge of seriously ill patients and new diagnoses. Thanks to the translational approach, new improved data bases

have already been developed and new treatments have already been given to the patients.

Chances are psychiatry might profit the most from the translational approach, in terms of better understanding of bio-psycho-social model of psychiatric disorders. Considering the complexity of psychiatric disorders, so far researches often weren't able to explain a psychiatric disorders in a sequence from morphe over personality to disfunction, and we often traveled through our everyday work by electing weather a biological or psychotherapeutical track and by following it. Translational, interdisciplinary approach could fill in the missing gap and reconcile the neural circuitry and biological underlining of the mental disorders to the personality and needs of the psychiatric patients, involving and respecting the epigenetic principles imperative.

Considering everything written so far, I am deeply pleased to be reading this book as it got out in the public. Altamura and Brambilla in 'Clinical Cases in Psychiatry: Integrating Translational Neuroscience Approaches' brought an exquisite work which offers answers to important and often overlapping topics from the psychiatric spectrum

of symptoms and disorders, and a worthy connection between neuroscience and clinical practice. It uses translational ways of describing psychiatric disorders by consuming the latest scientific contributions. It is written in the plain and sharp-cut language and offers a synthesis of the psychiatric knowledge. Every chapter is woven from a several parts that smoothly get you through a complex material. It starts with a general question about a specific psychiatric theme, unreservedly uncovering a diagnostic uncertainties that we deal with every day, and is followed by explanation of it through a case report, underpinned with the needed clinical evaluation and a physical examination of a person, literature review and the diagnosis criteria explanation, and latest scientific data in morphological imaging of the brain, the neurotransmitter misregulation and the surrounding risk factors, as well as the treatment possibilities.

There are 16 chapters in the book, each bringing a worthy content for every person

interested in mental health, ranging from a medical student to an experienced professional in psychiatry. It starts with the description of early-onset psychosis, travels over themes such as deficit schizophrenia, psychosis in elderly, cannabis induced psychosis, psychotic disorders due to traumatic brain injuries and finishes the psychotic block with bipolar disorder. It also includes borderline personality themes with differential diagnosis, depression in different parts of life, the question of dementia versus pseudo dementia, anxious and conversive disorders, catatonia and Cotard's syndrome, and finishes the book by a various of new therapeutic methods (TMS, long-acting antipsychotics).

This masterpiece explains psychiatry like no book so far and it was a pleasure reading it. It is an exquisite work of two authorities in psychiatry, whom I congratulate.

Daniela Vojnović, MD

Title: Neuropsychodynamic Psychiatry

Editors: Boeker, Heinz, Hartwich, Peter, Northoff, Georg (Eds.)

ISBN: 978-3-319-75111-5

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Publisher: Springer International Publishing

Number of pages: XI, 637

This exceptional book tries to bridge the gap between psychodynamic conceptions of the individual and neurobiological models of psychiatric disorders. In today's age of reductionism this book is not just oriented towards biological, psychological or psychodynamic

approach. Instead it links all those three aspects in a unifying, integrative model.

The authors have meticulously written every of 30 chapters of this book. In the second chapter the neuropsychodynamic foundations are presented and discussed. The third chapter of the book focuses on the development of modern neuroscience with the possibility of gaining insight into neuronal processing of mental processes. Fourth chapter of the book aims the self as the subject of all our experience and hence of consciousness. Fifth chapter of the book discusses three-dimensional neuropsychodynamic model of

mental disorders and their defence mechanisms. In the sixth chapter the author talks about a central issue in neuropsychanalysis, which is the concept of the unconscious. Chapter seven of the book focuses on a novel taxonomy of psychoanalytic, psychological, neuroscientific and philosophical concepts of the unconscious. Chapter eight reviews recent findings on the neurobiology of sleep in general and dreams in particular. Chapter nine covers the phenomenon of transference as well as countertransference. Part two of the book (Chapter 10 – Chapter 20) focuses on a syndromal approach discussing schizophrenia and other psychoses, depressive syndromes, manic and bipolar syndromes, anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, somatization and bodily distress disorders, anorexia and bulimia, traumatogenic disturbances, personality disorders, dissociative disorders and addictive disorders through the lens of neuropsychodynamic psychiatry. Chapter 21 is about principles of neuropsychodynamic therapy, while Chapter 22 is about neuropsychodynamic perspectives of acute psychiatric wards. In Chapter 23 authors present the relevance of day hospital settings for the psychoanalytic treatment of borderline patients. Chapter 24 discusses how creative therapy amplifies certain neuronal brain activities and how it reduces some

cerebral inhibitory functions. In Chapter 25 four different psychotherapeutic settings for the outpatient psychotherapy and the respective indication criteria are presented. Chapter 26 focuses on interaction of psychodynamics and psychopharmaceuticals and consequent neuromodulation. In Chapter 27 we find out about the essentials of psychotherapy research in the context of neuroscience and answer to the question of how the mental correlates of psychotherapy can be investigated. Chapter 28 discusses concepts of empirical and clinical research in psychoanalysis and neuropsychanalysis, while Chapter 29 introduces author's own imaging study on chronic depression and psychodynamic therapy. Finally, Chapter 30 is about neurophilosophy, neuroethics and the question of template for neuropsychanalysis.

I consider this book a great success as it is a remarkable work which is saying more than enough on the theme of the view of the brain as a bio-psychosocial organ in a neuro-ecological model. Although it discusses a complex subject, it is easy to understand, all – inclusive and well sistemized. I congratulate the authors for a high-quality work which implicates a longtime experience and excellence in their field of expertise.

Darko Vlahović, MD

Title: Dimensional Psychopathology

Editors: Massimo Biondi, Massimo Pasquini, Angelo Picardi

ISBN: 978-3-319-78201-0

eBook ISBN: 978-3-319-78202-7

Publisher: Springer International Publishing

Number of pages: XIII, 300

This book describes in detail the specific approach in diagnosing psychiatric disorders by evaluating different psychopathological dimensions. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between mental disorder and natu-

ral reaction to unfavorable life event. The current nosology relies on a categorical approach that has been much criticized. Having the knowledge of the variety of clinical picture in psychiatry and the complexity of psychiatric diagnosis, based on two decades of experience, the authors developed psychopathological tool called SVARAD (Scala per la VALutazione RAPida Dimensionale, i.e., “rapid dimensional assessment scale”). The main goal of SVARAD scale is to provide a rapid and efficient measurement of an individual’s placement upon a continuum between pathology and normality. It is a five point rating scale consisting of ten items or psychopathological dimensions, with a quick and simple summation that can be easily used in clinical practice. It explores the following dimensions: apprehension/fear, sadness/demoralization, anger/aggressiveness, obsessiveness, apathy, impulsivity, reality distortion, thought disorganization, somatization, and activation. Every dimension has been defined with both psychopathological and functioning criteria. The book is divided into ten chapters with more subheadings. The first chapter describes the issues of setting boundaries between psychiatric diagnostic entities where the dimensional approach could have its role in seeking an optimal solution in diagnosing and individual planning of treatment, not just pharmacological but also psychotherapeutic. As an example of using the SVARAD scale in clinical practice, the second chapter shows that there are psychopathological dimensions or more than one

characteristic symptom for each disorder that deserves greater clinical recognition and research. In the next six chapters, each of the mentioned psychopathological dimensions is explained from the aspect of neurobiology, neurophysiopathology, neurotransmission, clinical cases and treatment with one chapter placed in emergency psychiatry. Each dimension of the SVARAD scale is described in a systematized and reviewed manner with given examples in clinical practice and representation of dimensions in psychiatric disorders. The last two chapters describe the relation between psychopathological dimensions and the pattern of clinician’s subjective experience in everyday psychiatry settings as well as the psychopathology of temporality in three paradigmatic cases. The SVARAD scale can complement DSM or ICD assessment by highlighting unique symptoms of each patient within the same diagnostic category and thus providing a more appropriate choice of treatment and more efficient patient prognosis. The idea of dimensional approach is interesting to think about because it takes in consideration disease severity and can also be used in other areas, for example in cancer patients or in an emergency setting which proved to be a useful tool. I consider this book useful in clinical practice as it points to a wider picture of patient psychopathology and certainly should be taken into account in order to improve individualized access to each patient.

Ivona Orlović, MD

