

Psychiatry: Anthropological Aspects

A. Kraus*

ABSTRACT

This article describes how different philosophical, cultural, social, and biological anthropologies have influenced not only 'object theory' (the way in which mental illness can become an object of scientific research) but also methodology (the access to this respective object) in psychiatry.

Keywords: Philosophical; Cultural social; Biological anthropologies

INTRODUCTION

This article describes how different philosophical, cultural, social, and biological anthropologies have influenced not only 'object theory' (the way in which mental illness can become an object of scientific research) but also methodology (the access to this respective object) in psychiatry. Anthropological prepositions determine research as well as practice in psychiatry in a latent way or explicitly in the approaches which are summarized here under the description of phenomenological-anthropological psychiatry. These existential approaches as well as those of a constitutive or transcendental phenomenology in psychiatry try to understand psychiatric disturbances as regular variations of basic human structures, such

as individuality and subjectivity, temporality and history, consciousness and freedom. Hereby not mainly the factual conditions for the development of psychopathological phenomena are investigated but the conditions which make the phenomena possible, originating from the essence of a person. The contribution of these approaches to a humanization of psychiatry lies above all in their endeavor to make the scientific methods and therapeutic measures adequate to the mentally ill as a person.

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*Corresponding author A. Kraus, Associate Professor, India.

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