

S06-03 - SCHIZOPHRENIA, EPIPHANY AND KAFKA'S "THE TRIAL"

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Schizophrenia, epiphany and Kafka's "The Trial" K. Conrad wrote *Die beginnende Schizophrenie* in 1958, but his description of the psychopathology of schizophrenia and his concepts of schizophrenia are still very enlightening to contemporary readers. One of several important concepts described is that of epiphany. In his description he stressed that this was a way of experiencing the whole world, perceptions, emotions, notions, etc. The schizophrenic patient not only experiences that every thing has a certain meaning attached to it, also this meaning has something to do with the patient. Nothing seems to be coincidental, but on the contrary seems to be specifically important for the patient. This sudden, intuitive perception of or insight into reality or essential meaning of the world resembles the experience of a revelation (=epiphany from ancient Greek). This way of experiencing/living in the world feels so "natural" to the patient, that he never questions what is obvious discrepancies and incompatibilities to others. Frans Kafka has been called the best descriptor of the schizophrenic world. His novel *The Trial* (*Der Prozess*) is commonly viewed as a description of bureaucracy, but can also be seen as a matchlessly description of the schizophrenic world. In the film the spectator sees every thing through the eyes of Joseph K and thereby has the opportunity to a first person experience of the self-reference, oddness and inconsistencies of the schizophrenic world. This brings the notion of epiphany to the lived world of the spectator.