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INCOERCIBLE VOICES: CLINICAL AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE OF AUDITORY HALLUCINATIONS

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Auditory hallucinations are a common symptom of schizophrenia and florid psychotic conditions. As observed by Jaspers such psychopathological phenomena entail a rich and complex clinical manifestation that is irreducibly linked to an impression of reality grounded in perception. However, most contemporary research has interpreted the jaspersian description in a literal and rather concrete way, equating hallucinatory experiences to mere disordered perceptions. Besides being theoretically problematic, such reduction of hallucinations to “perceptions without an object” substantially neglects fundamental clinical features of the experiential structures implicated in psychotic states (e.g. fragrance, unescapability, feeling of passivity, self-reference, idiosyncrasy). In this perspective qualitative-phenomenological analysis maintains a crucial role in disclosing the structure of hallucinatory meaning-generation which is relevant for both clinical practice and research.