

## THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE “SITTING INSIDE”: A SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

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*Abstract:* The article deals with the problem of transforming human subjectivity. Factors which condition the formation of the internal concept of the Self, as a phenomenon “sitting inside,” are defined. Aspects connected with the concept of “norm” and “pathology” from positions of modern philosophy, social psychology, psychoanalysis and medicine are analyzed. The relevance of the study: at present, there is a radical revision of ideas about the inner component of the self-concept.

The aim of the study is to explore the socio-philosophical aspects of multiple subjectivities of the individual from the perspective of the phenomenon of “sitting inside”.

In addition to the general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, the research methodology involves the application of methods such as the systematic method, the method of interdisciplinary research and the method of hypothetical modelling.

The author’s interpretation of the phenomenon of “multiple subjectivities” is given. The results of the study have been the subject of numerous discourses at scientific and practical conferences at international and all-Russian levels and seminars.

The study concludes that the phenomenon of “sitting inside” should be characterized as a pathological deformation of personality subjectivity.

*Keywords:* personality, multiple subjectivity, within, multiple personalities, pathological deformity.

### Introduction

At the heart of every phenomenon and essence of a process analyzed from a philosophical point of view is the original inner struggle of Oneness

and Multiplicity. Every individual is driven by a sincere desire to bring any process or phenomenon to homogeneity, which is the natural force guiding philosophical knowledge. At the same time, there is a desire for heterogeneity, for di-

versity, which aims to bring something different to the existing reality, different from the familiar, different from the ordinary consciousness (Tenkov & Kierkegaard, 2017).

## Literature Review

Starting from Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Hume, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, the problem of the subject in philosophy was studied by Russian philosophers V. F. Asmus, M. A. Garntsev, V. N. Zheleznyak, E. V. Ilyenkov, A. N. Kruglov, V. N. Kuznetsov, V. A. Lektorsky and others. The problems of the ontology of consciousness, meaning, intersubjectivity, corporeality, the “mask” of subjectivity, and the phenomenon of presence have been addressed in the works of E. Husserl, R. Ingarden, M. Merleau-Ponty, J.-P. Sartre, E. Levinas, M. Heidegger and others.

In Russian philosophy, the phenomenological analysis of multiple subjectivities is presented in the works of L. Bertalanffy, M. Castells, S. Hawking, M. Conner, M. Beche, M. M. Waldrop, M. Gell-Mann, D. Alberts, T. Czerwinski, H. Haken, I. R. Prigozhin, V. E. Kagan, E. N. Knyazev, S. Bogomolov, E. Moren, W. R. Ashby, A. Atlan, V. E. Voitsekhovich, R. Arzumaniyan, L. A. Rastrigin, V. P. Filatov, V. I. Arshinov, I. A. Gerasimov, A. P. Nazaretyan, etc.

The starting point of phenomenological research is reflection. Reflection does not deal with the objects themselves, it is interested in the ways of our knowledge of the objects, subjective conditions of comprehension by means of concepts, and also in the limits of reasoning activity and finally in the distinction between rationality in the narrow sense (*Verstand*), and rationality in the broad sense (*Vernunft*), the source of all our higher concepts (Roberts, 1992). Studying the social-psychological phenomenology of personality, K. Lewin (Levin, 2000) introduced the concept of “psychological field” as a space of a person’s life world. A person located in this field experiences both attraction and repulsion forces, which the researcher later called valences. The ratio of these valence forces on the part of the referent part of the social world is reflected in the emotional state of the individual.

When we say that our “I” observes the thoughts that appear to our “I”, this is not entirely

true. If our thoughts were presented as some object and our self could view the thought as if from the outside, then we could say that the self is observing the thought as it comes in. (In bipolar mental disorders, this happens). When the psyche functions normally, if a thought comes to us, our “I” does not function in those moments. It only comes back to life later when it recalls the thought, but the thought does not exist in the brain at that time. It is this phenomenon of thought that we call the phenomenon of “I”. It is a reflection. This rapid alternation of thoughts driven by someone and our thoughts, which have arisen about these driven thoughts, creates the illusion of a continuous work of the “I”. However, this work is interrupted from time to time. In reality, our thoughts are only those thoughts of thoughts.

Speaking of the ambivalent assessment of the potential of one’s own self, V. S. Mukhina (2010) argued: “Man is a danger to himself by his multiplicity, by the multiple manifestations of his polar essence. A man is dangerous to himself by his ambivalent essence...” (p. 393).

The peculiarity of man’s reflexive directions determines the multiplicity of his consciousness, which endows him with the unique ability to go beyond the bounds of natural phenomena, commonplace, and traditional perceptions of the world. It is also an opportunity to find oneself in another, different reality than the normal one.

The idea of multiple subjectivities has its roots in the philosophical system of G.W. F. Hegel, which is based on the identity of being and thinking. In Hegel’s (2008) opinion, “although the demented man is aware of the multiplicity of his consciousness, accepting the contradictions existing within it between the objective and the subjective, but has no possibility of overcoming this splitting” (p. 181).

The notion of “multiple subjectivities” began to take shape in the framework of J. Deleuze’s (1998) theory of subjectivity. It regards subjectivity as a system of dynamisms within the framework of “oblique” thinking. It implies that the split subject is different in relation to its thinking, and thinking itself refers to movements carried over only in the conditions of the personal subject (pp. 95-99). The personal subject is a state of “split” in the dynamic system of subjectivity itself, where the “larval” is not only a mask but also the germ of further development. In his

theory of multiple subjectivities, each of the attitudes or ideas can receive a virtual body and appear as a “larva”. In the process of actualization, the “larva” or idea becomes real and acquires a private existence. The actualization of an idea takes place as its individuation, which occurs as an objective process of the transformation of impersonal sensuality into a subjective self, the becoming of a living self.

Dennett’s model of multiple outlines, based on Deleuze’s theory of subjectivity, suggests an already decentralized consciousness in which different parts of the brain create contradictory and complementary narratives. So, in our view, multiple subjectivities are the presence of several worldviews in consciousness, each of which sets out a different worldview in harmony with one another.

In order to identify the properties of multiple subjectivities, let us consider this phenomenon within the categories of “norm”, “pathology”, or

“disorder”. Assuming that multiple subjectivities itself are the norm, with all the “advantages” and “disadvantages” of this concept.

The “disadvantage” of the concept of the norm is that this concept is vague: it is intuitively assumed that everyone knows what a norm is, and there is no need to clearly define the boundaries of the concept of the norm. However, due to the so-called clarity and the obviousness of the norm, this concept still remains undefined and allows a variety of interpretations, including the most radical ones. For example, V. S. Pshizov (2015) states that there is no definition of a mental norm. The complexity of the concept of a norm is also due to the fact that there are many approaches to the study of this concept.

Without considering it appropriate to go into detail about the different approaches to the interpretation of “normality” and “pathology” in our study, we will summarize them in the form of Table 1:

Table 1.

Scientific Approaches to the Concepts of Normality and Pathology

<i>Approaches</i>	<i>Norma</i>	<i>Pathology</i>
<i>Statistical</i>	Arithmetic mean	Deviation from arithmetic mean
<i>Adaptation</i>	Ability to adapt to social life, to socialize	Lack of ability to adapt to social life, to socialize
<i>Culturally relativistic</i>	Compliance with the norms of the society or social group to which a person belongs.	Failure to conform to the norms of society or the social group to which a person belongs.
<i>Psychopathological</i>	Absence of pathology	Existence of pathologies
<i>Clinical</i>	Lack of mental illness	Existence of mental illness
<i>Subjective</i>	Feeling unwell	Lack of feeling unwell
<i>Humanistic</i>	Man lives in accordance with his essence	Man lives in contradiction to his essence

We believe that a way of knowing the norm is only available through the lens of pathology research. All existing classical research concepts belong not to social philosophy but to the philosophy of medicine and bear more than a distinctive imprint of physiology and biology. At the same time, the organic theories of society at the present stage, however close in spirit to physiological concepts in medicine, are still not suited to the new state of society as a subject of knowledge. This topic is the subject of a more in-depth study, which is beyond the scope of our study.

In order to justify the research topic logically, let us formulate the concept of “norm”. The norm is most often a construct, including a social construct, which leads to the “blurring” of the

concept, while pathology is explicit. Accordingly, it seems more constructive not to define pathology through the norm but to define the norm through pathology. It seems to us that the notions of medical, psychological and social norms must be strictly differentiated, with the medical norm being the fundamental norm. The psychological norm is based on the medical norm, in turn, and the social norm is based on the medical and psychological norms. Attempts to broaden the scope of the meaning and application of the concepts of “norm” and “pathology” ultimately result in the concepts losing their meaning.

For the purposes of our study, we will refer to the phenomenon of multiple personality disorder as dissociative disorders (from the Latin dissoci-

ate, “to be separated from the community”). In the scientific literature, it is defined as:

- Dissociative identity disorder (DID, according to the Diagnostic And Statistical Manual Of Mental Disorders - 5);
- Organic dissociative identity disorder;
- Multiple personality disorder (MPD in ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases - 10, class 5);
- A split personality;
- Multiple personality syndrome.

According to DSM-IV, dissociative identity disorder is diagnosed when four criteria can be distinguished: the patient has two or more identities, each with its own worldview, worldview, habits, age, etc. Each of the identities can control the patient, the patient forgets much about themselves, and it is not the usual forgetfulness; this condition has not occurred in a state of alcohol, drug abuse or illness.

Dissociative disorder is accompanied by symptoms such as depersonalization, decreolization, depression, anxiety, mood swings up to suicidal or panic, various phobias, hallucinations, sleep disorders, eating disorders, bouts of confusion, loss, amnesia, which is of a psychological rather than physiological nature. Usually, amnesia as a defence mechanism allows forgetting traumatic memories. However, dissociative disorder works differently, switching from one identity to another, and the frequency of this mechanism also increases.

The very notion of dissociation was introduced in the 19th century by the French psychologist P. Janet, who argued that complexes of ideas could be separated from the personality and continue to exist independently. He also suggested that new identities were the result of coexisting mental centres that exist in one individual. A similar point of view was expressed by D. R. Hofstadter (2003), who called the view claiming that a person is a single organization with its own will a myth (p. 304). From his point of view, a man is a set of different sub-humans with their own will. Such a sub-human is less complex than a whole person and has fewer problems with internal discipline. In turn, the sub-human is divided into sub-characters, which are simple and, as such, have no internal contradictions. It thus represents the human being as a hierarchical organization.

As psychiatrists point out, the splitting of the

self into “true” and “alien” leads to the alienation of both the “true” self and the “false” self, which gives rise to emotional states such as depression, despair, despondency, etc. in a person with a split consciousness phenomenon.

The medical literature uses the term abuse to describe this trauma. For the child, it is abuse because someone who, by definition, should take care of the child is abusing the child. This creates a dissonance: on the one hand, the child blames himself/herself for what has happened, but on the other hand, he/she does not recognise the guilt and feels anger. This dissonance can lead to a perception of a bad person, who “deserves” to be punished, and a good person, who is not guilty of anything and cannot be punished. If the dissonance can be eliminated in some way, the “bad child” can disappear, and only the “good child” remains, but any stressful situation will re-create the “bad child”. It should be noted that not every abused child exhibits the ability to create new identities.

Thus, the causes of dissociation in S. A. Mason, who is portrayed under the pseudonym of Sibil Isabel Dorsett in F. R. Schreiber’s novel “Sibil”. Her doctor Cornelia B. Wilbur referred to the family environment of Sibil: her schizophrenic mother, who forced Sibil to take laxatives after meals, inserted enemas, and sexually abused her; her father Willard, who condoned her mother’s actions, her grandfather, whose religious fanaticism drove her to hysteria (Schreiber, 2013). Billy Milligan also attributed the splitting of his own personality to the sexual abuse perpetrated by his father; at that point, he did not want to be Billy Milligan anymore (Keys, 2015). For Chris Costner Sizemore, the hero of *Three Faces of Eve*, the cause of dissociation was being forced to kiss her dead grandmother at the funeral (Thigpen, 1992). For Ashley Patterson, the heroine of Sidney Sheldon’s novel “Shattered Dreams” – sexual abuse was committed by her father.

Social role theory explains the possibility of split consciousness by the fact that each of the social roles, which are independent of the individual, requires a certain set of personal qualities from the individual and forms the individual into a social character, a certain identity. Accordingly, to perform different social roles, multiple identities in the individual are necessary.

The existence of multiple identities may cre-

ate an internal conflict between them, as the personality traits of one identity may conflict with the personality traits of another identity.

Another possibility of dissociation or splitting of consciousness E. N. Knyazeva and S. P. Kuryumov calls yogic meditation, which may lead to the fact that within the framework of complex structure, simple structures stop interacting and change into an isolated structure (Knyazeva, 2011). This leads to the formation of isolated consciousnesses, i.e. to the formation of multiple personalities. Shamanic practices, in which a trance state of multiplicity is achieved, cause a similar effect.

One of the characteristics of patients diagnosed with a dissociative disorder is the ability to enter a trance state. When combined with the ability to dissociate, the ability to achieve trance states becomes a factor that can enhance and develop dissociation.

Researchers who study human creativity believe that genius is often accompanied by various psychological illnesses, among which schizophrenia is primarily mentioned. For example, N. V. Goncharenko (1991) names such philosophers as Plato, Kant, Schopenhauer, Emerson, Nietzsche, etc., as well as scientists Pascal, Newton, Faraday, Darwin and others among geniuses suffering from this disease.

Here we see similarities between dissociative disorders and schizophrenia: both are a consequence of ontological insecurity or ontological uncertainty.

According to R. D. Lang, the ontologically secure or confident person feels whole, one with his body, with which he was born and with which he will die. He also perceives the outside world as a whole and unified other people as real and alive, and interactions with other people as potentially pleasing to him. An ontologically confident person will meet all the challenges of life with a sense of the reality of self and others. R. D. Lang (2017) notes that “the ontologically secure person has a sense of his presence in the world as a real, living, whole and, in a temporal sense, continuous person, the only problem for the ontologically secure person is the inability to understand or immerse himself in the world of the ontologically unsure person” (p. 32).

Three forms of anxiety are characteristic of the ontologically insecure person: a) absorption, b) disconnection and c) petrification. Absorption

for the ontologically insecure person is the danger of being understood, loved, even seen by someone, and thus of being absorbed by the Other. Because of the fear of being absorbed into the Other, one fears relationships with others and even with oneself, as one fears losing one's own autonomy and individuality. The main defence against the fear of suppression is isolation, which creates the illusion of security and protection. Disconnection - he perceives fear of the destruction of one's individuality by the reality around him, so any encounter with reality as a threat to his individuality. Petrification is a fear of turning a person into a stone or some other inanimate object or attempting to depersonalize another person by objectifying him or her. In other words, the person fears that they are just a thing to other people, that they are not recognized as a person. In order to preserve one's individuality, one chooses as a defence the strategy of external agreement with everyone else or depersonalization of the other person. The strategy of abandoning one's own individuality, of becoming a thing, allows the ontologically insecure person to avoid the danger of being turned into a thing by others, thereby anticipating this danger. Depersonalization, which implies objectification of others, acts proactively: objectifying the other person before the other person does in relation to him/her.

Thus, dissociative disorders and schizophrenia have much in common. They are caused by ontological insecurity. The disintegration of the self is also similar: in dissociative disorders, there is the “true” self and sub-personalities, while in schizophrenia, there is the “true” self and the “false” self, which is fragmented and therefore similar to the sub-personalities, according to Mills.

The symptoms of dissociative disorders and schizophrenia are much the same: despair, fear, depression, etc.

In both cases, a psychological defence is triggered, resulting in unconsciousness for a period, as the mind finds itself unable to solve the problem it is facing, nor is it able to withstand the physical strain and emotional stress.

In dissociative disorders, a new identity is formed to solve a particular problem. This can happen, for example, in a dissociative fugue state (from Latin Fuga “flight”), where the patient leaves for an unfamiliar place where he loses



memory of his past life (universal knowledge is retained). He invents a new name, a new biography and leads an ordinary life, remembering nothing of his “past” life. Dr Wilbur drew attention to the fact that new identities, like the original consciousness, are also capable of creating new identities: Victoria Antoinette Charlo includes Marcia, Mary, Vanessa and Syvilla Ann, Peggy includes Peggy Ann, Peggy Lou, Sid and Mike (Schreiber, 2013).

Another identity will be formed to solve another problem, and the number of such identities is not limited. Their number depends on the number and complexity of the problems one faces. Here we observe another property of multiple subjectivities. The principle of additionality, which operates in it implicitly, and dissipative disorders allow us to visualize the operation of this principle.

Typically, of the existing identities in dissociative disorder, one identity is active (occupies the spot, as Billy Milligan’s identity explains this effect) (Keys, 2015), while the others are “asleep” at the time. Rejean Vadaskovich, one of Billy Milligan’s identities, when asked by Judy whether identities appear and are removed at will, argued that he or Arthur controls the taint depending on the situation: in prison, he decides which identities can be used in a dangerous situation and which should not be released. In save situations, Arthur controls the taint and determines which identity can enter the taint since that identity’s abilities are called upon to solve the problem.

Dr Wilbur, whose patient was Sibil Dorset, explained her multiple identities differently: Sibil’s original self was in the realm of conscious thought, and her alternative identities were in the subconscious, like lacunas, but they functioned, in her view, when stimulated to solve a particular problem or to protect the original self.

Each identity has its own memory and remembers its actions when it was active; periods when it was passive fall out of its memory. It can only guess and suspect that it has “memory lapses” during which someone else acted on its behalf.

In dissociative disorder, identities often do not “know” about each other and only state “memory lapses” that they conceal from themselves, their relatives and others around them as well.

The creative activity also has some dissociative connotations. As E. N. Knyazeva and S. P. Kurdyumov, internal dialogue lies at the basis of this activity (Knyazeva, 2011). While one “I” of a creator creates and produces new ideas, his second “I” acts as a critic of these ideas, and the third “I” acts as a secretary, formalizing and presenting ideas to the scientific world and therefore requiring their clarification, detailing, exact formulation necessary for publication. The first self most often expresses an optimistic outlook. It is innovative, hopeful and believes in the future, while the second self is pessimistic, sceptical of the dreams of the first self, conservative and traditionalist, and respectful of the past.

Hillman uses the concept of “personified multiple personalities” to define this phenomenon. Hillman denies the phenomenon of multiple personalities as a dissociative disorder: such a definition, considering multiple personalities as a mental illness or as a failed integration of particular personalities. It is a cultural prejudice that wrongly identifies one identity with the whole person, in his view (Hillman, 1996). J. Hillman bases his position on Jung’s understanding of identity (p. 36). According to K. Jung (1994), personality is inherently plural, therefore potentially splitting into “partial personalities” that are both regressive threats and progressive differentiations for it. K. Jung, as the counter polarity of natural separateness, defines individuality. Thus, personality is inherently diverse. It is a differential unity, an organization consisting of complex parts (p. 388).

V. M. Rozin (2009) believes that the phenomenon of multiple personalities is common among criminals, the mentally ill, the esoteric and the marginalized. In his opinion, criminal switches from one personality to another with the help of alcohol, drugs, special forms of behaviour and so on. In this case, it seems to us that we are not dealing with the phenomenon of multiple personalities. Rather with multiple subjectivities, as the offender does not have symptoms corresponding to dissociative disorder.

We highlight the following features of multiple subjectivities:

1. Ability to restructure, flexibility - implies the presence of several character traits that can be defined as personality forming, capable of complementing each other or being the opposite of each other: any of them can become

the central “core” of the self, around which other character traits are built up, or new ones are built in. Any non-standard life situation may require restructuring, as the dominant character trait at that moment is unable to respond to the challenge posed to it if we define that situation in Toynbee’s categories. The loss of the ability to restructure is one of the reasons that force consciousness to create new identities when there is a need to solve some new problem in life. Accordingly, each new non-standard situation requires the creation of a new identity, the number of which is not limited by anything.

2. Dialogism, internal communication - a dialogue within the self. Y. M. Lotman (1992) defines internal communication as auto communication, as a message from “I” to “I”. M. Lotman sees the difference between the communication “I-He” in the following: in the communication “I-He”, he is the object, the addressee, and in the communication “I-Self”, I am the subject of transmission, the addressee, the holder of information “I-He” communication disseminates information spatially, while “I-Self” communication is temporal, “I-He” communication has a mnemonic function, “I-Self” communication has a cultural function. I-Self communication can receive additional meaning, and it can carry additional information; in I-He communication, the medium changes, and the code and the message are permanent; in I-Self communication, the medium remains permanent, but the message changes, transforming and acquiring new meaning.

In the case of the phenomenon of multiple personalities, the dialogue becomes external, personified: doctors treating dissociative disorders, and in the literary treatment by D. Keys in “The Mysterious Story of Billy Milligan” (2015), draw attention to the fact that new identities begin to communicate with each other, determine who in a particular case will take the dominant position, etc. Communication between identities is also important in the treatment of the dissociative disorder.

Discussions and conclusions about multiple subjectivities emerge as a response to the challenge of the complexity of the world and the novelty and creative originality of the intellectual tasks posed, which allows us to speak of multiple

subjectivities as a paleologist of cognitive practices.

An analysis of the concept of multiple personalities as a radical case of multiple subjectivities allows us to define the phenomenon of “sitting inside”.

“Sitting inside” is a kind of subjective abstract perception of one’s self under the influence of personality-forming external and internal factors that can complement each other or be the opposite of each other. Any one of them may become the central “core” of the self, around which the perception of the self-image is formed, the other character traits are built up, or new ones are built in. The one trait that allows a person to solve standard life situations in a way that seems effective or habitual becomes dominant over the others, but that does not mean that it becomes substantive.

Often the effect, or phenomenon, of multiple subjectivities escapes the gaze of the average person. Although each individual is essentially an open, evolving system, with a set of parameters and abilities to both change and chooses one of several alternative scenarios for their own existence, in reality, they can only realize one of them during their life journey. The other scenarios are abandoned at the moment of making a choice. As a rule, the realized scenario seems to be the only possible one to the surrounding people since it appears to an outside observer as a well thought out, lined up in a clear-cut, maximally holistic plan, a predetermined sequence of actions. This is especially clear if the “author of the scenario” has been able to realize his life potential and use the opportunities in his life and, therefore, to be recognized by his contemporaries or descendants in any sphere of activity.

Summing up the above, we conclude that at the heart of every phenomenon and the essence of the process analyzed from a philosophical point of view lies the original inner struggle of Oneness and Multitude. Every individual is driven by a sincere desire to bring any process or phenomenon to homogeneity and, at the same time, a desire for heterogeneity, for diversity, aimed at bringing something different to the existing reality, different from the familiar, different to the ordinary consciousness.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that there is often inherent linearity of thinking on the part of the outsider, as they can only see the action that

has been realized. The unrealized possibilities and scenarios cannot be traced or analyzed in any way. Related to this is the fact that the alternativeness of reality, its multiplicity, can only be detected “from within” by the individual himself and only from the perspective of the one who makes a direct choice in favour of a particular decision, which is essential, if not vital, for him.

An analysis of the concepts of normality and pathology in the context of this study allows us to classify the concept of multiple subjectivities as normal, including social normality, while schizophrenia, the concept of multiple personalities, is pathological.

The study presented here does not claim to be the “final truth” on the topic, but it does note that the emergence and formation of multiple subjectivities can be caused by social causes, namely crisis phenomena in society that destroy traditional values and proposed new values, leading to an eclectic world view of society.

The topic of the study of multiple subjectivities has not yet been fully explored; it is constantly being discussed and comprehensively analyzed in contemporary philosophical circles. This is primarily because the existence of alternative possibilities of consciousness and the acceptance of the self as a split subject does not allow the individual to stop developing and, consequently, provides a basis for reflection for members of the scientific community over the years.

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