

Abstract

Despite of the growing body of multidisciplinary literature dealing with autism, encounters with *a reality on the spectrum* remains an under researched area. During my two years long fieldwork I discovered the controversial nature of being *on the spectrum*. To *be on the spectrum* is at the same time similar and different from the kind of situations in which any human being is entangled. This diploma thesis follows the process of formation of *being on the spectrum* situated in specific “playful” environment. It focuses on heterogeneous interactions among human and nonhuman agents. It follows multiple (a)symmetries that emerge in this process. The aim of the thesis is to introduce the reality *on the spectrum* in an innovative and processually situated way and making it a leverage of exploring the nature of the social. The ethnographic research took place in four “playrooms” and mapped the material practices of the alternative therapy Son-Rise. Through mirroring, the main therapeutic practice, boundaries of similarity/otherness where the other is emerging as an autistic subject are continuously negotiated, generated and blurred. Becoming similar comprises of multiple practices, including assuming other (autistic) sensitivity and inventing similar (body) competencies. In addition, the diploma thesis discusses the hybridity, multiplicity and inconsistency of the ethnographer’s research position, which significantly shapes her thinking about the reality *on the spectrum* and which also leads to the cultivation of the newly embodied ethical sensitivity and reflexivity.

Keywords

autistic spectrum, Son-Rise program, playroom, reality on the spectrum, (a)symmetry, mirror, authenticity, joining

