Transcendental-philosophical foundations of a concept of delusion

The criteria of delusion (conviction, incorrigibility, impossibility) derived from the General Psychopathology (1913/1997). But as Walker (1991) pointed out, Jaspers was describing those criteria as a starting point which he considered superficial. A more strictly logicalanalytically oriented argumentation which was pioneered in the recent past by Spitzer referred to the transcendental-philosophical foundations of delusion. Accordingly, delusion can be recognized against the background of a strict reference to Kant's transcendental philosophy, in an erroneous reasoning in the knowledge of one's own self or the knowledge of the world, introduced by Kant as paralogism showing that it is impossible to infer from the subject of thought the substance of a soul. If, for Kant, a "doctrine of the soul based on pure reason in the sense of classical rational psychology is impossible" (pp. 104 ff.), it follows that any undoubted idea of a thinking being that one is, given about the characteristics of subjective certainty and incorrigibility, always produces a misjudgement of reality in the categories of pure reason. In conclusion, further research has to reconsider the philosophical foundations of delusion together with epistemic issues to improve a reliable concept of delusion in clinical practice.