Abstract This article presents a new characterization of the concept and experience of intersubjectivity based on four matrices that we see as organizing and elucidating different dimensions of otherness. The four matrices are described through key references to their proponents in the fields of philosophy, psychology and psychoanalysis: (1) *trans-subjective* intersubjectivity (Scheler, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty); (2) *traumatic* intersubjectivity (Levinas); (3) *interpersonal* intersubjectivity (Mead); and (4) *intrapsychic* intersubjectivity (Freud, Klein, Fairbairn, Winnicott). These intersubjective dimensions are understood as indicating dimensions of otherness that never occupy the field of human experience in a pure, exclusive form. The four matrices proposed need to be seen as simultaneous elements in the different processes of the constitution and development of subjectivity.

Key Words intersubjectivity, otherness, philosophy, psychoanalysis, psychology

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Patterns of Intersubjectivity in the Constitution of Subjectivity: Dimensions of Otherness

The 'other', the 'non-I', can be seen as a recent addition to psychological theories about the constitution of subjectivity, as also can the more consistent, systematic discussion of intersubjectivity and its vicissitudes in the different dimensions of research and psychological practice. Apart from a few exceptions, there is no doubt that psychological theories stem largely from the modern tradition, in particular the Cartesian and solipsist traditions. However, the field of psychology is increasingly confronted with the ethical demands resulting from the need to recognize otherness as one of the elements that constitute singular subjectivities. In the end it is a question of how debts to others, contracted in the constitution of the self, can be faced up to and accepted by each individual. Besides the ethical implications, this is an important question in the field of mental health.

Many theories, from socio-constructivist to psychoanalytical, have turned their attention to the importance of recognizing otherness in the processes of the constitution of the self, giving precedence in their studies to research into the intersubjective forms of communication (see, with regard to this, Apprey & Stein, 1993; Figueiredo, 1994; Ogden, 1994; Valsiner, 1998). It is clear that this contemporary trend runs counter to much of the modern philosophical tradition, which sees the 'I' as a self-constituted unit, independent of the existence of an 'other', and of others who are singular and differentiated. It also goes against the classical subject/object opposition, the epistemological hallmark of modern thought, which led to the notion of intersubjectivity being rejected and seen as devoid of interest, especially for theories, such as psychological ones, that aspired to be scientific.

Considering the European philosophical current of phenomenological philosophy, which has brought to the foreground the study of the concept and experience of intersubjectivity, the panorama determined by modern thought is beginning to break down. Edmund Husserl (1929/1977), in his pioneering work, developed central arguments regarding the fundamental importance of intersubjective experience for each and every form of knowledge of self and the other, gradually altering and refining his views in the course of his work, adding increasingly valuable contributions to the theme of intersubjectivity. The work of his disciples and successors, Scheler, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas, made phenomenological philosophy a central point of reference for those interested in studying intersubjectivity in its various dimensions. To a certain extent these philosophers diverged from Husserl, but always inasmuch as they were building on his intuitions.

Although, at least initially, it did not have such deep or widespread repercussions, the work of George Herbert Mead in the USA, from the beginning of the 20th century up to the 1930s, also represented a philosophical revolution with far-reaching consequences for sociology and psychology. It was he too, within the American functionalist and behaviorist traditions, who constructed a new concept of the 'I' and the self, based totally on the presupposition of the social and intersubjective character of gestures and behavior of the subject directed towards other subjects, and of the meanings that the individuals involved in this social web produce for the world, for their own lives and their own persons, including the field of their 'mental life', of their awareness of the world and of themselves.

Based on the phenomenological tradition, as well as on so-called 'social behaviorism' (or 'symbolic interactionism', as Herbert Blumer,

a disciple of Mead's, called it), there seems to be no doubt that there exists, in the formation of the self, an other—a 'generalized self'—and others—differentiated selves—in their concrete existences and, possibly, in their radical otherness. It should be mentioned in passing that the closeness between the ideas developed in phenomenology and those of Mead is sufficiently clear to justify, for example, the fact that a collection edited by Thomas Luckmann (1978)—*Phenomenology and Sociology*—begins with the reproduction of a 1910 paper of Mead's ('What Social Objects Must Psychology Presuppose?'). The date should be noted, for at that time Husserl had not yet produced and published anything on intersubjectivity, still remaining close to Cartesianism and Kantism. It is equally noteworthy that Berger and Luckmann (1966), in the classic *The Social Construction of Reality*, should have organized their thought around authors such as Husserl and Alfred Schütz on the side of phenomenological sociology, and G.H. Mead on the side of social psychology, in order to treat society as a subjective reality.

But is it in fact possible to perceive what the other *self* feels, what it perceives? We assume that in some way it is, since psychological practices are based on elements of perception, and especially on mutual perception. Possibly most communication depends on a sophisticated interplay between the perceptions of the participants in the therapeutic process. Theories of perception as well as of communication define and seek to give intelligibility to different forms of communication. There are pre-verbal, infra-verbal, pre-representational, corporal and perhaps even instinctual forms of communication, as well, of course, as verbal communication itself. There are conscious, pre-conscious and, who knows, perhaps even unconscious perceptions. Why not? We often transmit what we do not know we have perceived, and also recognize sensations and feelings whose origin we are unsure of. We recognize our own feelings, but are they really ours, or the other's? At such times we cannot help sometimes feeling rather nostalgic, wondering if things were not simpler in the days when the philosophical-scientific fashion set a safe distance between the 'I' and the 'non-I', between subject and object. If an other were to be conceivable, it would only be so by analogy with what we are. After all, it was only possible to conceive of knowledge on the basis of what happened in a consciousness, and all communication had to be thought of in terms of communication between an ego and another ego, the ego of the other being thought of in the image and likeness of my own.

In the background we can hear the voices of theorists of psycho-analytical technique querying whether there has in fact been a transition from 'one-person psychology' to 'two-person psychology', or

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maybe even 'three-person psychology' (cf. Ghent, 1989; Gill, 1993; Reis, 1999).[1] In the end, however, we are forced to recognize that the study of the arising of relations between an 'I' and an other is one of the cornerstones of contemporary thought in philosophy, psychology, psychoanalysis and even ethology.

In some recent ethological studies (see, e.g., Bråten, 1998), at least three meanings of the notion of intersubjectivity have been distinguished, which, with varying degrees of evidence, can be traced back to the original proposals of Husserl's and Scheler's phenomenology. The first, most classic meaning, which is present, for example, in the existentialist philosophy of Martin Buber and Gabriel Marcel, reveals the sense of interpersonal communion between subjects who are attuned to one another in their emotional states and in their respective expressions. The second meaning, recognizable in such studies as Habermas (1970), understands intersubjectivity as that which defines joint attention to objects of reference in a shared domain of linguistic or extra-linguistic conversation. A third meaning is the capacity for inferences to be established concerning the intentions, beliefs and feelings of others, involving simulation or the capacity to 'read' other subjects' mental states and processes, which to some extent relates back to the classic concept of *Einfühlung* (empathy). In addition to these meanings, the notion of intersubjectivity is often defined, in psychological terms, as being the situation in which, through their mutual relations, numerous (or just two) subjects form a society or community or a common field and can speak of 'us' (see Jolivet, 1975, p. 128). It can also be defined as being that which is lived simultaneously by various minds, giving rise to the term 'intersubjective experience'.

We consider that for modern philosophy (as also for the emerging science of psychology) an irreconcilable distance has been placed, from Descartes onwards, between 'I' and 'other', or between consciousness and the world. This has led to the need to postulate the 'problem of intersubjectivity': that is, how to establish 'bridges' between the poles, how to establish 'communication' between the 'I–other' and 'consciousness–world' oppositions. From this context an epistemological problem emerges: how is it possible to know the other, another consciousness?

As already mentioned, at the beginning of the 20th century there was an initial attempt to overcome the 'I–other' and subject–object dualities, through Husserl's concept of an intentional consciousness. This was a departure from the abyss between I and other, in search of a means of overcoming solipsism. Husserl's early work maintained that I can only know the other in a mediated form, through my own consciousness.

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However, my consciousness is no longer a consciousness in itself, enclosed around itself, but rather a consciousness that is always 'consciousness-of-something', consciousness open to the world, to others, *intentional consciousness*. But the I, and also the consciousness, continues to prevail in the task of knowing, about the world, about other I's.

Although Husserl introduced a perspective for bridging the gap between subject and object—while still maintaining a Cartesian tradition of self-centeredness of the I in itself and in its own consciousness—it was left to George Herbert Mead, across the Atlantic, rightly to criticize this supposed precedence of the consciousness's own world, as well as the introspective method, which, in a way, did not destroy but relativized the scope of the Husserlian phenomenological method. For Mead, consciousness always comes afterwards, after interaction with *significant others* and with the *generalized other*, after that of the world of shared meanings and social roles articulated in the form of a system and which regulate the actions of a society. It is on the basis of this generalized other that an identity of the 'I' can be constructed and stabilized.

It should also be remembered that with Husserl and, especially, with Merleau-Ponty there emerges from the phenomenological tradition, with no apparent influence from American developments, a second possible solution for the epistemological problem: seeing intersubjectivity as being constituted on the basis of experiences of shared reality, of searches for 'union', where previously separation was recognized. What gains prominence here are the notions of lived body, perception and co-construction of reality, with a clear departure from the tradition established by the representational philosophies, or philosophies of consciousness. Thus the plane of interpersonal intersubjectivities also gains a foothold in European territory, even going beyond what had been developed by Mead and his disciples.

It is also necessary to highlight the philosophical paths that emphasize the pre-subjective modalities of existence, the original sphere, the plane of original indifferentiation, and trans-subjective intersubjectivity. Here the epistemological problem of whether it is or is not possible to know an other is not raised. *Intersubjectivity comes to be seen as a false problem*. Also found on this level are the concept of a primordial field of experience in Max Scheler and Heidegger's *Dasein*, as well as the proposition of intercorporality based on the notion of *flesh* in Merleau-Ponty. On this plane of investigation of primordial experience and pre-subjective modalities of existence there appears to be no room for the usual notion of intersubjectivity, clearly stemming from a philosophical

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tradition based on the primacy of the subject, of the rational subject who is in command, the hallmark of modern philosophies. Even the interactionist tradition established by Mead does not fully account for this condition. The interactionism of social behaviorism, even though it includes the notion of *generalized other*, always starts out from a concrete interaction between organisms and subjects that are already differentiated, already organized and functioning on an individual or inter-individual plane. It is to this intersubjectivity that the concept of interpersonal intersubjectivity really belongs, while the Europeans who carried on from Husserl were moving towards other dimensions of intersubjectivity, such as the one that we are referring to as the trans-subjective dimension.

It is in the work of Emmanuel Levinas, also a disciple of Husserl's, that we find a certain distance being re-established between I and other, so that yet another dimension of intersubjectivity comes to light. The ethical question now emerges in all its force: the other—the concrete, singular other—precedes the I and demands work and effort, and where there is work and effort there is maladaptation, pain and suffering. It is no accident that the contraction pains that mark the emergence of an other from the female body that contains it, but which can contain it no longer, are called in Portuguese *trabalho de parto*, which can be translated as 'separation work'. The issue of intersubjectivity is cast in doubt because of what can be considered the illusions of the plane of interpersonal intersubjectivities. There is no full adaptability between I and other. The other not only precedes me, but always exceeds me. There thus arises a plane of traumatic intersubjectivity.

We could mention yet another dimension, the fourth, mainly the fruit of psychoanalytical contributions, which includes the study of 'intersubjective' experiences established 'within' subjectivities, that is to say, an intrapsychic intersubjectivity. This is the dimension that has been explored since Freud and his second theory of mind—Id, Ego and Superego—especially in British psychoanalytical thought, in the works of Klein, Fairbairn and Winnicott, with their theories concerning internal objects, splitting and dissociations of the I.

In a recent article, the French psychoanalyst André Green (2000), dissatisfied with the mistakenly simplified oppositions in the field of investigations into the subjective constitution (such as the limited and limiting opposition between intersubjective and intrapsychic aspects), rightly pointed out that 'it is in the interwining of the internal worlds of the two partners of the analytical couple that intersubjectivity takes on substance' (p. 2). By means of solid arguments, Green attempts to show that the contemporary emphasis on intersubjective aspects of

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analytical practice must not cause us to lose sight of the fact that it is only through the tense dynamics between intrapsychic and intersubjective aspects that the specificity of analytical work can be preserved.

We would like to add that, apart from the error of oversimplified oppositions, it must also be recognized that the intersubjective dimensions denote poles that are never occupied in a pure, exclusive form. The four dimensions that we propose should be thought of as coexisting simultaneously in the different processes of constitution of the subject. The relations between these dimensions seem to follow a logic of supplementarity (Derrida, 1977), a theme to which we will return later.

Our intention in this article is thus to present a new characterization of the concept and experience of intersubjectivity based on four matrices that we consider to organize and elucidate different dimensions of otherness, and therefore different intersubjective dimensions of the self. We present below the four matrices and the forms in which they appear in philosophy and psychology.

The Four Intersubjective Matrices and Their Proponents

1. *Trans-subjective* Intersubjectivity: Scheler, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty

This first intersubjective matrix refers to the field of primordial, maternal reality, conceived of as a continent, and to some extent as an 'all-engulfing continent' (prior to the separation of internal from external), in relation to subjective experience. It is the experience of a welcoming, nourishing soil, in which otherness emerges as a constituent of subjective experiences, not through opposition or confrontation but through its character of primordial inclusion. This is clearly a matter of a pre-subjective modality of existence.

The philosopher Max Scheler (1923/1970) begins his investigations into the possibility of knowledge of the other by questioning the belief that we must start from the *cogito*, that is, that consciousness must above all be consciousness of self. As Merleau-Ponty (1988) notes, 'he starts explicitly with total *indifferentiation* between I and the other' (p. 42), and 'for Max Scheler, *consciousness is inseparable from its expression* (as a consequence of the cultural complex of its means) *and there is no radical difference between consciousness of self and consciousness of the other*' (p. 43).

Scheler (1923/1970) proposes that the first things that we truly

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perceive around us are *expressions*, which is similar to Mead's perspective, based on Wundt and Darwin. However, Mead did not go so far in the postulation of the gestalt character of expressive experience. A baby is first of all sensitive to the expressions of living bodies around it in an experience that would have to be recognized as pre-personal. Only later is the baby able to perceive particular inanimate objects and thus distinguish its experience of itself from that which it can have of an other. In this sense, it is not the bodies and egos that we perceive initially, but indivisible wholes that, according to Scheler, are grasped intuitively, with total lack of distinction between what belongs to the subjective sphere and what belongs to the objective sphere. Scheler believes that although we are unable to know the other through its body or its consciousness, we will be able to know and recognize it through its manifest expressions, which make us one with it, in an original field of primitive indifferentiation.

Heidegger (1927/1962), in his formulation of an existential analytics, as set forth in *Being and Time*, refers to an understanding of being that characterizes a previous understanding of the world into which we are launched without any choice and which is always made up of our different subjective experiences and our possibilities for interpreting the objects with which we come in contact. According to Heidegger, on this plane there is no choice; we are thrown into this form of implicit understanding, which ends up constituting us in the context of a tradition, and where we live under the control of the impersonal, *das Man*. It is a field of possibilities that establishes and delimits the conditions of our experience and the horizon of our actions. A certain otherness is always present in the constitution of subjectivities, insofar as the tradition that precedes us and surrounds us must be understood as that which, while not being I, makes me come to be what I am, or, for Heidegger, a *Dasein* (being-there) and a *Mit-sein* (with-being). In his writings posterior to *Being and Time*, this is the dimension of the *Logos*, of language, which bears the mark of this primordial trans-subjectivity and constitutes the possibilities for existing, hearing and speaking.

In his final, unfinished book, *The Visible and the Invisible* (1964), Merleau-Ponty seeks to present his view of the origin of intersubjective relations, of the contact of the body with the world, and with the bodies of others. In this book he sets out the basis of his *ontology of the reversibility of flesh*, which takes body porosity and the sphere of sensory reversibility as its primordial soil. Merleau-Ponty attempts to describe a plane of experience which is that of quasi-indifferentiation, as if on the plane of the sensory, of the most radical intercorporal

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relationship, the particularities that give rise to differences were almost abolished and we then had to recognize that in the beginning there is only unity. But, as he reminds us, if there is no absolute coincidence, if there is no total simultaneity or 'instantaneous' reversibility, that should not be understood as a failure. The distance and, thus, the level of singularities is a characteristic of the lived body in its relation with the world and with other bodies. On the other hand, we must recognize the 'hinges' that make up this basic plane, which is undoubtedly no longer the divided, separate situation of the I–other and subject–object dichotomies.

The notion of *flesh*, emphasized by Merleau-Ponty (1964) in his last book, is of fundamental importance for a full understanding of the real dimension of his conception of intercorporality: 'a general thing, half-way between the spatio-temporal individual and the idea, a kind of incarnate principle which produces a style of being wherever a part of it is found' (p. 184).

This notion of *flesh* seems to provide Merleau-Ponty with the common 'matter' that makes it possible to speak of intercorporality. The notion of *flesh*, better than any other on account of its radicality, contains the mutual constitution of the polarities in an existential field, which is that of the permanent reversibility possible between a body that touches another body and is touched by it. Merleau-Ponty does not assume a world in which distances do not exist. He does not defend a pure indifferentiation that would take us back to the concept of the great original unity, in the form of the primordial 'one', from which everything arises and to which it returns. If seeing is touching at a distance, if I seek with my body to touch and be touched, this is because distance exists, and difference is a fact. However, what can make seeing and touching significant and charged with meanings is the simultaneity of differentiation and indifferentiation, the latter as the presence of the same *element* (flesh) in the body and in the world (Coelho, 2000, p. 24). Merleau-Ponty (1964) suggests that, 'rather than competing with the thickness of the world, that of my body is, on the contrary, the only means I possess to reach the essence of things, making me world and making them "flesh" ' (p. 178).

2. *Traumatic* intersubjectivity: Levinas
In the work of the French-based Lithuanian philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, we encounter the second matrix, that of traumatic intersubjectivity. There is a constant reference in this matrix to the irruption of *alterity*[2] or, rather, to alterity as a traumatic irruption and event. For Levinas, the concrete, singular other precedes me and traumatizes me,

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and through that constitutes me. In every moment of the other's emergence, something cannot be simply assimilable into the field of the already known and already available for use and control. The other is in fact thought of as a radical alterity, which cannot be conceived or approached on the basis of an experience that is characterized as an assimilation of that which in principle presents itself as being assimilable. For Levinas (1998), an intersubjective relation necessarily implies a certain dislocation, or modification of subjective experience, whether in its original constitution, or in subjectivities already constituted but in the process of being reconstituted, such as occurs in psychoanalysis, for example. According to Levinas, in every process of subjectivization there is the inalienable experience of a *radical passivity*, which is the basic subjectivizing condition. Subjective experience is seen as a permanent and inevitable opening to the other, in its alterity, which will always in principle exceed 'our capacity to receive, accept and understand, and which, however, as an expression of suffering, demands some response' (Figueiredo, 2003, p. 58). Thus, for Levinas, the experiences of subjectivization should not just be processes in which you 'fatten yourself up' with the assimilable foods coming from the other. They should also, especially, be characterized as shared experiences and transformations (and transformations imply work) in the face of that which in principle tends to be excluded. That which is ignored or rejected is precisely what is different from me and could make me 'other'. An experience of subjectivization that consists just in assimilating what is similar ends up by becoming a permanent exercise in sameness, in identity as a refusal of alterity, and the intersubjective experience itself becomes lost in repetition.

The form of subjectivization that recognizes alterity, that shuns adaptation, the quest for a perfect fit between I and other, that recognizes that something of the other always exceeds me, will in turn always be traumatic—this trauma and exceeding will always require and demand work (and pain) on the part of the subject. In this way, the contact with the other undergoes the inevitable impact of incomplete adaptation, of the impossibility of a perfect fit. In a way the traumatic experience of the other is the necessary counterpoint to the trans-subjective experience we spoke of in the previous section, so that a field of intersubjectivity can truly be constituted.

In the psychoanalytical theorizing of Freud, Ferenczi and Laplanche, we find more or less explicit references to this traumatic intersubjectivity, which is based on the idea that the other will impose his/her sexuality on me as a strong impact, unable to be assimilated and symbolically incorporated. The unconscious sexuality of the other thus

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appears as simultaneously constituent and traumatic. This form of conceiving original experiences of subjectivization opens the way, in different psychoanalytical theories, to an understanding of the origin of the anxieties of separation and individuation, which in turn involve, in their particular form of subjective coexistence with otherness, experiences of loss, abandonment and castration.

In this dimension, otherness/alterity is traumatic because it causes fractures and requires work on permanent processes of inadaptation between I and other.

3. *Interpersonal* Intersubjectivity: Social Pragmatism and Symbolic Interactionism

As already mentioned, it is also necessary to recognize the field of relations constructed in the interactions between organisms and individual subjects, the field of interpersonal intersubjectivity. This is the field in which *gestures* directed towards others—partial acts that the others must receive and to which they must respond (the *gesture* being an incomplete action that others complete and whose meaning is only constructed and defined in the interaction itself)—are at the basis of what comes to be constituted as shared meaning, as mind (consciousness) and as self (Farr, 1980). Not only can no one have access to himself and his consciousness, but neither can anyone endow himself with a *me* and a consciousness except through the mediation of the other and his responses. There is a clear echo of Hegel in Mead's formulations, developed on the basis of a dialectical logic that is heavily indebted to Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, although it claims to be derived from the American functionalists.[3]

Also belonging to this philosophical tradition are the psychological and psychoanalytical studies of the first interactions between the infant and the adult world, including the vicissitudes of these interactive processes. The adult world, however, does not present itself as the world of culture, as the trans-subjective other, but is always personified by an individual, such as the mother, in physical, individualized interaction with her baby. More broadly, going beyond these studies of early social development, we can say that the influence of functionalism and interactionism is strong in all American psychoanalytical thought on *interactional* or *relational psychoanalysis*.

On the other hand, but in a way that is understandable to anyone capable of perceiving the echoes of Hegel in Mead's work, certain traces of Hegel and his dialectics can also be detected amongst other scholars of interpersonal intersubjectivity. In fact, even in some American psychoanalytical writers who emphasize the dimension of

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trans-subjective intersubjectivity, such as Thomas Ogden (1994), as is evident in his concept of the 'analytic third', Hegel's influence can easily be observed, which is perhaps the result of a certain diffuse presence of Hegel in US thinking concerning the intersubjective nature of the self.

4. *Intrapsychic* intersubjectivity: Freud, Klein, Fairbairn and Winnicott

This intersubjective dimension refers fundamentally to the plane of the mental apparatus (Id, Ego and Superego), to that of internal objects, and, in a general way, to what in psychoanalysis is known as the *object-relating* mode of mental functioning. That is to say, in psychoanalytical theory it is possible to conceive of a dimension of intersubjective experience in which the presence of objects (in this case, other subjects, or at least part of them) does not need to be effectively a part of external reality in order for them to have an effect and produce consequences in mental terms. In this matrix we encounter the foundations for an understanding of the great splittings (such as those between body and mind, reason and passion, will and impulse) and also the personifications of mental forces or faculties. In this dimension, which is explored in some depth in the works of Klein, Fairbairn and Winnicott, intersubjective experience comes into being through an intricate network of relations with objects, lived on the intrapsychic plane. Although these 'internal' objects may have had, at some moment in the life of the subject, their real (in the empirical sense) 'external' correlate, it is not due to these possible external references that they have their effect, since, being internal objects, they observe their own specific laws and functions, unknown in the external world. For this conception to make any sense, and for it not to collapse in the face of the argument that these presences of otherness are not in fact the real presence of an other, but an integral part of what is called the subject, it is necessary to remember Freud's postulation of a mind that is formed not as a unit, based on the primacy of consciousness, but rather as a multiplicity, based on the primacy of the unconscious and the constant presence of mental conflict. It is also necessary to remember the heuristic importance, in psychoanalytical terms, of the notions of identification, incorporation (Freud) and introjection (Ferenczi). It should be pointed out that, in psychoanalytical terms, the forms of presence of the other indicated in the processes of identification, incorporation and introjection are not 'felt to be simply phantasies, but are instead felt to portray a concrete reality about who or what one is, who or what one's objects are, what they can do to one and what one can do to them' (Caper, 1999, p. 97).

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The term 'internal object' was first coined by Melanie Klein, who saw it as referring to an unconscious subjective experience, lived by the child, like a multitude of beings who, with all their activities, friendly and hostile, install themselves in the person's body. Klein drew a distinction between this form of mental experience and another less primitive one, related to the Superego, which can be described as the presence of the parents' voices in the mind. However, for Klein, there is a very primitive (in mental terms) experience in which 'perceptions of the external world received at this level of the unconscious tend to become so saturated with these concrete, instinct-laden phantasies that they seem indistinguishable from them' (Caper, 1999, p. 96).

The Scottish psychoanalyst W.R.D. Fairbairn starts out from the idea that the baby initially suffers from an unnatural separation from external objects (in particular, the mother), as it depends on an object that is physically and emotionally absent for the greater part of the time. This suffering leads the baby to try to establish internal objects within itself that act as substitutes and solutions for unsatisfactory relationships with real external objects (Fairbairn, 1952, p. 40) and which can in this form be 'controlled'. In general, we can say that, in this matrix of intrapsychic intersubjectivity, we are in contact with a special form of otherness, in which the other appears as an 'absent-presence'.

Final Thoughts

To conclude, we would like to repeat that the intersubjective matrices constitute dimensions of otherness that never occupy separately, in a pure, exclusive form, the field of human experience. The four matrices that we propose should be seen as simultaneous paths in the different processes of the constitution and elaboration of subjectivity. The relations between these matrices follow what the French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1977) called a logic of supplementarity: in other words, each dimension is always an appeal for supplementation addressed to the other, just as each dimension looks to the other to make up for its weaknesses or to help control its excesses. By way of an example, we will indicate below in very general terms some of the links that can be discerned between the matrices.

Perhaps the easiest matrix to grasp is that of interpersonal intersub-jectivity, since it is at this level that the concept of 'intersubjectivity' seems to operate in its clearest form. Nevertheless, it is easy to see how the interpersonal leads us, in fact forces us, to think of intrapsychic intersubjectivity, as a self is constituted by introjecting complementary

roles, being the result of processes of internalization (in primary and secondary socialization) that place significant others in the condition of what can be thought of in terms of instances and 'internal objects'. On the other hand, when, by abstraction, the generalized other is formed, we find a connection with the trans-subjective dimension inhabiting the nucleus of the self. However, neither does the generalized other have the primordial character of what we must understand as culture and society—that is, the primordiality of the trans-subjective—nor do the other internalized significances possess the special dynamics of what, on the intrapsychic plane, functions as internal object or intrapsychic instance. We need to leave the field of interpersonal intersubjectivity in order to be able to develop more fully the intersubjective dimensions that require studies and considerations from other fields, focusing on other aspects of subjectivity or viewing them from different angles.

Likewise, as we have already suggested, traumatic intersubjectivity is indispensable for the emergence of a subjective singularity from the primordial trans-subjective soil. Thus it is that in Heidegger, as in Merleau-Ponty, there is a reference to the absolutely other in me, to an 'outside the world' and 'outside the being', without which nothing could be experienced beyond oneself. It is in Levinas, however, that this 'otherwise than being' takes shape as radical otherness. On the other hand, the mere externality of the other would never result in sub-jectivization unless in this other there were also found a welcome and a living-space, and unless something of this previous experience of inclusion were not constantly operating in every encounter, whether marked by traumatism or by complementarity.

In fact, each of the matrices directs us towards angles and aspects to which that matrix does not itself have access, so that we are obliged to commute continually between them with no expectation of a synthesis in which the question of intersubjectivity could finally be resolved.

Notes

1. 'One-person psychology' is understood as referring to the tradition that sees the psychoanalyst in the role of observer, with the mental activity of the patient being the object of study; 'two-person psychology' refers to the practice that includes the subjective experience of the psychoanalyst as an integral part of the process; 'three-person psychology' is a possible reference to the model developed by Thomas Ogden, heavily influenced by the work of Bion and Winnicott, which envisages an 'analytic third', simultaneously constituted by and constituting the analytical field formed by the psychoanalyst and the patient.

2. We will use a nearly foreign word in English (*alterity*) to translate Levinas's *alterité*. This French word derives form the Latin *alteritas*, meaning the state

of being other or different; diversity, otherness. This has been the usual English translation of the French *alterité* in philosophical publications, such as Johnson and Smith (1990).

3. It should be recalled that the functionalists had as one of their focuses the notion of experience itself, being divided in their studies of experience into those who followed a Kantian path and those following a Hegelian path (Kant and Hegel being the twin founders of modern thought on the subject).

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