Harboring Alien *Lifeworlds*: The Second-person in Thought Insertion[1]

Albergar mundos de vida ajenos: la segunda persona en la inserción del pensamiento

[Artículo]

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Abstract

In phenomenology, the delusion of thought insertion is described and explained differently. There is a common idea that the delusion depends either on a lack of sense of agency or a confusion between self and others. I propose that delusions are alienations regarding what is expressed in some thoughts, which makes them unfamiliar. From this perspective, the delusion has to do with the fact that the lifeworld expressed in inserted thought, given from a second-person perspective, is rooted in a different lived-body experience than one's own. This contrasts with ordinary thoughts presented from the first-person perspective, with which we have a sense of intimacy. This discussion is an opportunity to put forth the idea of the second-person perspective: certain world experiences are given to me through others, as distinct from those given to me directly as a lived body. In inserted thoughts, there is a sense in which some perspectives of reality, different from mine, are disclosed through an alien voice or inside me. The distinction between the first-person and second-person perspectives leads to a better understanding of the primal constitution of the self and others based on the relation between the body and the world as it is given to us.

Keywords: phenomenology, structure of consciousness, intersubjectivity, lifeworld, lived body, minimal otherness

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Resumen

En fenomenología, el delirio de inserción de pensamiento se describe y se explica de diferentes maneras. Existe una idea común de que el delirio depende de una falta de sentido de agencia o de una confusión entre uno mismo y los demás. En este artículo, propongo que el delirio es una alienación respecto de lo que se expresa en algunos pensamientos, que los vuelven desconocidos. Desde esta perspectiva, el delirio tiene que ver con el hecho de que el mundo de la vida expresado en el pensamiento insertado, dado desde una perspectiva de segunda persona, está arraigado en una experiencia corporal vivida diferente a la propia. Esto contrasta con los pensamientos ordinarios que se dan en la perspectiva de primera persona, con los que tenemos una sensación de intimidad. Este análisis es una oportunidad para plantear la idea de la perspectiva de segunda persona: es decir, ciertas experiencias del mundo me son dadas a través de otros, a diferencia de aquellas que me son dadas directamente como un cuerpo vivido. En los pensamientos insertados, hay un sentido en el que algunas perspectivas de la realidad, diferentes a la mía, se revelan a través de una voz ajena o a través de mi interior. La distinción entre las perspectivas de primera y segunda persona conduce a una mejor comprensión de la constitución primordial del yo y de los demás, con base en la relación entre el cuerpo y el mundo tal como nos es dado.

Palabras clave: fenomenología, estructura de la conciencia, intersubjetividad, mundo de vida, cuerpo vivido, alteridad mínima.

Introduction

Delusions are a common symptom of psychosis. One such delusion, that of thought insertion, involves experiencing some thoughts as alien and, therefore, as produced by another (see : Henriksen, Parnas, & Zahavi, 2019; Ratcliffe & Wilkinson, 2015). In *The Day the Voices Stopped: A Memoir of Madness and Hope* (Steele & Berman, 2001), a book about the life of a schizophrenic patient, the descriptions of psychotic episodes give us some insights into the nature of inserted thoughts. The patient reports that, in one episode, voices in his head say,

> What a Loser! You know your life is over (…) Unless you kill yourself, you will live like this—an animal—for the rest of your life, with us as the only people who talk to you … You have to kill yourself, Kenny. There is no other way. (Steele & Berman, 2001, p. 58)

These kinds of reports are sometimes described as inserted thoughts, inserted voices, or auditory hallucinations. Although the distinction between external and internal voices is somewhat fuzzy, in the case above, the patient experiences some voices "within his head" and others as coming, for example, from the radio (Steele & Berman, 2001, pp. 1–2) and as unwelcome intrusions in his life.[1]

[1] In this paper, I will not explore the phenomenological differences between these experiences. What matters here is the feeling of lacking familiarity with certain linguistic expressions (see Ratcliffe, 2017).

Some perspectives in phenomenology and philosophy of mind ascribe different causes for this phenomenon. I begin by summarizing some of those perspectives, which I lump into three general views (see Table 1): The first one gathers perspectives in which the patient's experiences are viewed as a problem of self-consciousness, specifically a lack of sense of agency over thoughts or internal voices; the second one includes perspectives in which inserted thoughts are seen as a problem of intersubjectivity: they have to do with an impairment in the distinction between self and others. Finally, a third group involves a perspective in which the insertion experience takes us to the core of the intentional structure of thinking. The difference between a normal thought and one experienced as alien lies in its content. An element in what is expressed in specific thoughts causes them to be experienced as something akin to a perception rather than a thought. The key would be to identify what, within the content of what is thought, makes it seem foreign; in this way, we avoid supposing there is something like a consciousness of self added as content to normal mental states.

Table 1. Explanations for the delusion of thought insertion from phenomenological approaches

	Description of the experience	Cause	Authors
1) Emphasis on either the lack of or the alteration of self-experience over inserted thoughts	Specific thoughts are experienced as separate from the normal flow of consciousness. It is felt that these thoughts are not produced by the person who experiences them (there is no sense of agency).	A problem in the metarepresentational observation mechanism, which determines the agency	Frith (1992)
	Specific thoughts are experienced as being produced within oneself (sense of ownership) but not by oneself (no sense of agency).	An alteration in the temporal stream of consciousness	Gallagher (2005)
	There is a loss of self-consciousness in some thoughts.	An alteration in the temporal stream of consciousness	Parnas et al. (2005)
	Upon reflection, some thoughts appear associated with the self, and others to a non-self.	Whereas the sense of for-me-ness of specific thoughts is not lost, it is somehow affected.	Henriksen et al. (2019)
2) Emphasis on the otherness of inserted thoughts	There is an experience of another self distinct from the authentic self. This leads to self–other confusion and delusional misattribution.	Intersubjectivity: a splitting of the self The sense of "being with others is replaced by a sense of detachment that may pass over into a threatening alienation,"	Roy (2017) Fuchs and Röhricht (2017)
3) Emphasis on the content of inserted thoughts	Thought is experienced as an intentional state different from thinking.	Subpersonal mechanisms (psychological)	Ratcliffe (2017)

Source: Author's elaboration.

My goal in this paper is to propose a fourth perspective (inspired by phenomenology) that gathers crucial ideas from the other three. Following Ratcliffe (2017), I state that it is necessary to understand alien thoughts in terms of the structure of the intentionality of thinking itself and, therefore, what is and how it is expressed in alien thoughts. What these thoughts express, the kind of information they bring forward, and the affections they imply are all clues for understanding the difference between thought insertions and other pathological symptoms (e.g., rumination in TOC patients or mind wandering phenomenon). From the perspective of Husserlian and Merleau-Pontian phenomenology, the meaning of thoughts encompasses the literal expression and its implications for the patient's life. This means that the spoken words are intertwined with the patient's general approach to the world, intercorporeal experiences, and autobiography. The reason that some thoughts are experienced as foreign may be that the expressed *lifeworlds* they imply differ from the patient's. They do not mesh with the patient's familiar way of thinking, their historicity, and their relationship to things and others.

I will provide some arguments to support the idea that the phenomenon of thought insertion does not have to do with a distinction between self and other. Instead, it has to do with the fact that what is expressed in the inserted thought is given from a second-person perspective, and therefore, the patient concludes that thought is linked to a different lived body. This would contrast with ordinary thoughts, given from the first-person perspective, and with which we have a sense of intimacy (see Zahavi, 2005); that is, they are in accordance with the way the world is habitually given to us. To pursue this perspective, I will explore the constitutive activity that is involved in the activity of thinking. As we shall see, this distinction between the first-person and second-person perspectives of givenness leads to a better understanding of the primal constitution of the self and others.

Some theoretical explanations of thought insertion

Insertion as a problem of self-awareness

Philosophical interpretations of thought insertion are based on the evidence provided by patient reports. Patients tend to interpret inserted thoughts as not being produced or controlled by them or even coming from someone else with a specific identity. Therefore, one of the most common avenues suggested for understanding inserted thought from a phenomenological perspective is positing that it has to do with a problem in self-awareness (cf. Frith, 1992; Parnas et al., 2005).

From a phenomenological perspective on states of consciousness, it seems that the way in which the flow of consciousness is constituted in disease gives a clue to the problem that we are facing (cf. Parnas et al., 2005). For Gallagher (2005), this problem in the stream of consciousness corresponds to an involvement of the temporal structure of thinking. According to Husserl (1991), a temporal structure underlies conscious states. What is experienced in the present is linked to the immediate past (retentions, in Husserl's terminology) and the immediate, expected future (protentions). This link determines the temporal flow of consciousness; therefore, any disruption

in this structure could affect thought experiences. Insertion could result from altering this natural flow, affecting the sense of self-awareness over certain thoughts, so they lose their *mineness* (Parnas et al., 2005, p. 329). Thoughts become detached from the temporal chain that usually links them together and loses the mine-ness that gives them global cohesion as given from the first-person perspective, making them appear alien. As in any set of coordinated elements, if one of them is uncoordinated, it acquires an alien character.

A similar perspective on thought insertion holds that the cause of the problem with the sense of self or mine-ness lies in the sense of agency that accompanies conscious states (cf. Frith, 1992; Gallagher, 2005). When the sense of agency over specific thoughts is lost (that is, when the sense that we produce them is lost), thoughts become reified, which implies that they become divided into discrete units. According to Frith (1992), some units are experienced as phenomena in the world (e.g., thoughts made by others) and some as phenomena of the self.

While Gallagher agrees that the insertion problem is characterized by the loss of a sense of agency over certain thoughts, he disagrees with Frith's (1992) contention that the explanation is a failure in the metarepresentational mechanism that determines agency. For Frith, the delusion of inserted thought appears as proof of the existence of subpersonal mechanisms that operate at a different level from the phenomenon itself, a sort of real-time evaluator of the phenomenon, relating it to the sense of self. Authors such as Zahavi (2008) have pointed out the problem of positing subpersonal mechanisms to which we have no direct access; for Gallagher (2005), such a mechanism does not accurately reflect the experiences of self (agency and ownership) that occur at the pre-reflective level of consciousness. It is unnecessary to posit a different process to explain the conscious experience; according to Gallagher (2005), we can find a lack of sense of agency in the experience itself.

Although it is possible to identify the basis of the psychopathology in the symptom itself, we must carefully consider whether the lack of sense of agency is an accurate explanation for inserted thoughts. Bear in mind that, in some cases, the patient may recognize that the inserted thought is self-produced and yet think it has a certain alien quality (Roy, 2017). Inserted thought would entail a kind of fragmentation of the self, in which the authentic self interacts with another that is "self" as well.

Pathological otherness and intercorporeality

Other features of patient reports are worth considering, for instance, the feeling of otherness in alien thoughts (Fuchs & Röhricht, 2017; Roy, 2017). Of all the characteristics of the experience of thought insertion, Roy (2917) especially points out that some patients experience alien thoughts as coming from an inauthentic self; that is, they consider inserted thoughts as produced in some way by themselves but in an unfamiliar, non-habitual manner.

He further believes that the experience of thought insertion is produced by a loss of boundaries between self and others: "The delusional person has a conscience of himself as another" (Roy, 2017, p. 203, my translation). The fact that one's own thought is experienced as strange does not mean that inserted thoughts come from another. Instead, the experience results from a self that is fragmented into two or more selves: an alter ego and an original ego. However, inserted thought does not refer to a kind of multiple personality disorder because the patient is completely conscious of the fragmentation, experiencing oneself as original and the other as alien. The fact that one of the selves is experienced as another points to an important interrelatedness in the constitution of the self and others.

Similarly, Fuchs and Röhricht (2017) emphasize the embodied aspects of conscious states, arguing that delusions generally involve impaired intercorporeal experiences. Inserted thoughts are symptoms of a more general pathology related to an embodied self embedded in a social world.

From Fuchs and Röhricht's (2017) perspective, thinking is a phenomenon that involves embodied relations with the world. This implies a shift in perspective: Rather than seeing psychopathology as an accumulation of disconnected symptoms, it is better to view it in a more ecological sense, as an embodied and situated experience.

Following these authors, the insertion of thought is a paradoxical phenomenon of self-centeredness since there is confusion between what is produced by another and what is one's own. In other words, the lack of intercorporeal resonance would affect the experience of one's thoughts. This idea inspires reflection on the relationship and difference between the private world of thinking and the public experience of interacting with others. Although with a different emphasis, this proposal resembles Roy's (2017) in that alienation points to a deeper problem than that initially apparent from patient reports; according to both authors, the problem ultimately lies in the patient's constitution of intersubjectivity.

An additional perspective on thought insertion is provided by Ratcliffe (2017). Although his theory seems to move away from the perspectives presented here, I believe he offers other elements for an embodied and situated perspective of the psychotic symptom. To wit, the author emphasizes investigating the content of inserted thoughts and what is expressed therein. An example can serve to clarify this: In other perspectives reviewed here, the thought content (e.g., "I have to buy the car for my son tomorrow") is different from the experience that I have of myself having that thought; it is believed that the pathology corresponds to a damage of the experience of myself having a thought, but not of the content of the thought itself. In Ratcliffe's proposal, by contrast, emphasis is put on the content of thoughts (that tomorrow I have to buy the car for my son), and this implies inquiring into what, precisely, is odd about this content (e.g., perhaps the person having the thought does not even have children).

In my view, focusing on the content of the thought itself rather than on other elements that may accompany it, such as a sense of self, provides an interesting perspective of thoughts. From this perspective, thoughts are unique forms of expression within the life of a given subject, considering thoughts in their historical context and their relation to other thoughts and conscious experiences. It is this interplay that may become altered under certain conditions.

Thought insertion as a problem of thought contents

Ratcliffe (2017) suggests that patient reports result from the affectation of the modal structure of intentionality. For some reason, the content of thoughts is misplaced as proceeding from some outer source, as in auditory experiences—although it does not precisely involve perceiving an outer voice.

According to Ratcliffe (2017), thoughts appear inserted when their content is experienced as alien. "Alien" is reflectively translated as "not my own": The intentional content of the thought is something I could not have thought. Since a thought is a personal experience, if it appears strange, it should correspond to an internal quasi-perception: An inserted thought is indeed a thought but with a qualitative aspect of perception. Since the content is alien, it must be produced by another, and the patient must therefore be listening rather than thinking, even if what he hears is produced "within" him; the content distortion leads the patient to confuse a thought with a perception.

Let us imagine that the thought that is experienced as alien is more extravagant than the banal "I have to buy my son the car tomorrow," for example, "Kill God" (cf. Frith, 1992, p. 66) or "You have to kill yourself (cf. Steele & Berman, 2001, p. 58). For Ratcliffe (2017), the belief, desire, or imagining appears as perceived—this sentence has not been wished or imagined but instead heard. This confusion between perception and thought leads to confusion between self and non-self: It is not a problem with the constitution of the self that generates the distortion but something closer to Roy's position, a problem with the constitution of intersubjectivity.

Ratcliffe (2017) inquiries into the experiential differences between intentional states and concludes that the difference between mental contents that are the product of thought and those that are the product of perception has to do with control: We cannot control what we perceive (its presence or absence does not depend on the self), whereas we can control what we think. Ratcliffe's explanation of the delusion differs from the others in that his starting point is not the lack of control over thought, as if control were a kind of content associated with the eidetic content of thought, but rather the fact that inserted thought does not appear as though because it, for instance, has rude or violent content (which is common in this kind of delusion), a kind of content that the patient would not usually express, that does not fit with who the patient is. It is experienced as involuntary and, therefore, as perceived. While there is a problem of control involved in alien thoughts, it arises not from a particular type of content of a controlling self added to thoughts but from the involuntary nature of the expressed thought content.

On the other hand, and contrary to Gallagher (2005), Ratcliffe (2017) agrees that this confusion of intentional states is a product of subpersonal mechanisms, again raising the issue of explaining the delusion through processes inaccessible through the patient's experience.

As I mentioned earlier, the phenomenological perspective I advocate here argues that there is no need to involve a self with a special kind of content accompanying every conscious experience to explain why "normal" contents are experienced as a part of a set of experiences that involve one singular life.

For instance, while my coworker may usually think, "Tomorrow I have to buy the car for my son," for me, that thought would feel alien. This could be because such a thought does not align with my family situation (that I do not have children), my expectations of what I have to do tomorrow (I will be busy for six hours, traveling internationally), my typical thought process for a significant purchase or investment (I have not considering financing, the kind of car, or where I should buy it), or the emotions associated with this thought (it may come associated with anxiety, whereas in a typical experience it would be associated with excitement), among others.

Ultimately, the critical point is that, While I may reflectively express all these experiences as either happening or not happening to an 'I,' in a more tacit and implicit manner, this 'I' corresponds to a sense of familiarity with the history of a body situated in its world. A phenomenological perspective on the constitution of thought can provide a fresh light on the delusion of inserted thought, focusing on the content of thought, as seen in the light of historicity and the subjective lifeworld.

Thought insertion as a problem of the second person

The three general perspectives on thought insertion that I have discussed contribute to my proposed explanation. First, I am in favor of a phenomenological approach that focuses on how inserted thoughts are constituted (as seen in Gallagher, 2005, and Henriksen et al., 2019) rather than one that tackles the problem of causality in terms of subpersonal (and therefore, unidentified) processes (see Ratcliffe, 2017). Second, viewing inserted thoughts as evidence of a fragmented sense of self and otherness (following Roy, 2017), as a part of a general embodied and embedded subjective life (following Fuchs & Röhricht, 2017) prompts consideration of the constitutive experience of thoughts influenced by a primordial experience of otherness. Third, Ratcliffe's (2017) emphasis on attending to the content of thoughts rather than to some sense that accompanies them—i.e., agency leads to a refinement of what is understood as a sense of self involving every conscious experience.

I argue that contrary to the idea of a self as a special kind of content, the feeling of self implies that every conscious state is linked to the same lived body. This means that a thought is not distinct from the experience of an embodied and situated human body. From a phenomenological perspective, this body is not understood as an object or a mere set of organs but as an intentional entity expressing itself while constituting and co-constituting the world with others. In Husserlian terms, *lifeworld* is the ground where human life unfolds (cf. Husserl, 1989b). It is not the totality of existing objects and others but a web of intentional implications, a network of horizons that shapes how things appear to me as consciousness. To that extent, it is the place where horizons unfold as possibilities of meaning that link the past of previous meanings with the future of possibilities. All intentional experiences, including what is expressed in a thought, are coherent with every subject's perspective of the lifeworld, encompassing their historical experiences. Thought is a way of expressing that lifeworld, so that each thought must be seen in consideration of that network of meanings that constitute my world (cf. Husserl, 2006).

If a thought does not participate in the individual's perspective of that lifeworld, it is perceived as happening to someone else. Ultimately, though, insertion takes us to the heart of what it means to have experiences in the second person. I will elaborate on these ideas in what follows.

An embodied perspective of thinking

Constitutive phenomenology has a starting point in supposing that everything given, from a first-person perspective, without an apparent exercise of consciousness (see Husserl, 1966) is based upon primal structures of intentionality. According to a phenomenology centered on the body (cf. Merleau-Ponty, 2012) and on the kinetic/kinesthetic experiences (Sheets-Johnstone, 2011), a lived body gives meaning to the world in its motioning, perceiving, and emoting,[2] and experiences itself while gives meaning to the world. In other words, what is given to consciousness is coherent with the link between body and world.

Merleau-Ponty (2012) highlighted the link between the body and the world in perception. What is given in perception points to primal structures of experience of the lived body that constitute itself and the meaning of the world in its being-of-the-world (Merleau-Ponty, 2012). The intimate relationship with the world for oneself is due to the historical relationship between the lived body and the world. We do not approach reality in some pure state but instead mediated by our history of bodily interactions with it; we do not experience our body as a piece of organic machinery but

[2] Recently, there has been an increased interest in the role of emoting in the constitution of a lifeworld. The world is constituted affectively through affective resonance with things and others, and a sense of self is constituted through this process (cf. Colombetti, 2014). For these reasons, a lack of affective resonance has consequences in the constitution of self and world, reflected in a generalized apathy. It can cause mental retardation and even death in children deprived of affective resonance (Spitz, 1966). And if an affective constitution impinges upon the emergence of the world to perception, it would also impinge on the emergence of the world to thought because thought is also an expression of the unity of the lived body and world (Merleau-Ponty, 2012).

through this constitutive experience of the world. Therefore, our world corresponds to our experience of the body. When my hand curves as it approaches the mug, as I tense the muscles of my arm, I anticipate and constitute the object I am reaching for with my touch. The weight and proportions of the mug are given in my motions. At the same time, the textures of the cup and the hot coffee are implied in the anticipatory movements of my mouth, which opens slightly, and of my tongue: My motions would be different for a cold beverage.

Following Merleau-Ponty (2012), thought is an expression of the body (that is, thought is an activity of the lived body). Therefore, we may posit that the lifeworld is also built on the passivity of what is given in images, fantasies, and memories.[3] This implies that thought, as much as it is an expression of the lifeworld, is linked to the historicity of the subject's relations to the world and others. All thought is a manifestation of this historicity, and therefore, its meaning is given concerning the larger flow of thoughts and situated and embodied experiences (cf. Fuchs & Röhricht, 2017; Ratcliffe, 2017).

Likewise, thought is a way I express myself; therefore, I can recognize my own style of thinking, just as I can recognize my style of walking or how I react emotionally to certain situations. This recognition of my own expressivity is implied in the idea that, in conscious experiences, we not only have experiences about the external world, but these experiences include a sense of self. According to Zahavi (e.g., 2005), a sort of "me-ness" can be characterized as something distinguishable from experiences; this me-ness is a quality or character present in all givenness. However, such a quality is not an I-qualia (see Heriksen et al., 2019, p. 1); instead, it has to do with the indexicality of the experiences, namely, the fact that they appear as given here. Following the idea of the primacy of the body in conscious experiences, this me-ness is a feature of the lived body as the center of the meaning (see Garavito, 2022; Merleau-Ponty, 2012; Sheets-Johnstone, 2011).

The first-person experience is based on this referentiality. This has an important implication: We cannot be conscious of a thing without this me-ness. The aboutness of consciousness and the experience of the self at this primal level are part of the same phenomenon. Furthermore, through such self-referentiality, the body appears linked to the world: The body is constituted in that unity in which the world and the sense of self emerge.

The experience of me-ness would not be added content to my thoughts but rather a recognition of my own style in it. This would align with critiques of the sense of self as a special content in that this does not correspond to subjective experience (Sebastian, 2019). The me-ness is a constitutive part of any experience as much they all express the historicity through which a lived body has

[3] Following Husserl (1989b), since the world of experience is different from the objective world of science, then the world of thought, as lifeworld, is different from the logical and mathematical world upon which it is founded.

constituted a world for itself. In other words, referentiality to an originally corporeal self is a constitutive part of reality. All experience of reality is constructed upon an indexicality, an agenciality, and a propriety that point to the embodied consciousness it has been given.

The second person as primal otherness

The consciousness of another is also experienced bodily: In another's movements and spoken or written expressions, in his gestures, "in the manner in which the other deals with the world" (Merleau-Ponty, 2007, p. 146), I grasp the other. To grasp the consciousness of another in his dealing with the world is to grasp how he lives it through his expressions. This means that in another's expression, in the mark he leaves upon the world, I also grasp what the world is like for that other body (e.g., in the way another hand holds an object, I experience the softness of it). I posit that this lived experience of another's way of dealing with the world, of what the world is to another, is more primal than our reflectively ascribing consciousness to another. Before another consciousness is given to us, we take notice of another's intentionalities, leaving a mark upon the world for me. For the first-person consciousness, other intentionalities appear as horizons of meaning from the second-person perspective: Your enjoyment of that gross licorice you are eating makes me see it as enjoyable from the second-person perspective. The old problem of solipsism, of whether others are conscious or not, is posterior to the experience of the way others give meaning to the world. Before the other is seen as another, there is a primal otherness experienced in noticing the meanings given by another body. This primal otherness contrasts experientially with primal mine-ness or me-ness, the experience of the world as being given in the first person (see Zahavi, 2005).

Is it possible to think about the experience of other consciousness in terms of minimal otherness and, therefore, about some perspectives of the world as pre-reflectively given from the second-person perspective? I believe so.

Suppose that the hand reaching for the mug is not mine, but my partner's, as I look. As soon as the hot beverage touches his lips and tongue, he makes a gesture; he contracts his face and his lips, letting his tongue stick out with a moan. At that moment, his expressions change my relationship to the beverage. The coffee was far hotter than expected: Not only did my tongue and lips alter their anticipatory motions, but my hand narrowed its curvature, and the angle of approach of my arm changed as well when I tried to take the mug my partner left on the table. I wish to grab the mug with my fingertips rather than with the palm of my hand: The warmth of the mug appears menacing rather than comforting, as it appeared before. Through another's body, the mug is given to me as excessively hot. But this change in how the mug is given is primarily not given from the first-person perspective, but rather in the lived experience of another body as I resonate with it. I experienced the beverage from a second-person perspective.

Whereas me-ness is experienced as the here and, therefore, is related to the experience of the lived body, otherness is given as there, as given in another lived body. This character of here or there is independent of the organization of objects in the visual field or of the place that my organic body occupies in space (there may be a "there" in my own body, analogous to thought insertion); it has to do instead with an intimacy with the given from the first-person perspective, which is absent from the second person perspective, in which meanings appear as projected from a lived body over there.

As those meanings appear as mere possibilities rather than actualities (e.g., the scorching beverage given through the expressions of another), not because the other appears as another self, whose interiority is opaque for me, but rather because the meanings of the thing are expressed in another lived body. Since that body is the *there* of my own experience, I can only experience those meanings by resonating with corporeal and linguistic expressions, and that defines the quality of their appearance from my own perspective. Interestingly, I incorporate the second-person perspective into my worldview. I begin to feel hatred for someone accused of violent behavior by others, even though I have not been a direct witness. Understood this way, the second person is not a phenomenological method by which I grasp another's consciousness (e.g., Depraz, 2012) but a modality in which phenomena are given to consciousness.

To the extent that those meanings with a sense of otherness partake of the constitution of what is given to me, they co-constitute my perspective of the lifeworld. Co-constitution is no mere co-validation (as in Husserl, 2006, where the world is epistemologically validated through exchange with other subjectivities). Instead, it is a primal constitutive experience in which other bodies participate in the givenness of the world to me. I shall consider the extent to which conscious life implies co-constitution; that is, to what extent others appear as openings to meanings of the world that I incorporate into my own.

In expressions, gestures, and interactions with the world, meanings are projected through another body. For example, the voice that warns me not to touch the hot stove has already made a quality emerge in the stove before I experience the voice coming from another. When I speak to my husband, rather than perceive him as another, I more accurately navigate the lifeworld expressed through his words, a perspective of the lifeworld that meshes with my own, that makes my own emerge in a certain way.

In what follows, I will argue that thought insertion is an experience of the world from the second-person perspective, expressed in thought. This will take me from explaining the anomaly to reflecting on the constitutive structures of thought, through which it is given from either the first- or second-person perspective.

What the second-person perspective tells us about the delusion of thought insertion

In his explanation of delirium, Karl Jaspers (1997) states that it "implies a transformation in our total awareness of reality". In this way, and following what I have argued, he questions the idea that delirium ought to be circumscribed to an erroneous belief but should rather be understood in terms of the global relationship between subject and reality, to the feeling of totality, coherence, and consistency between what is given to consciousness, and not as a phenomenon that is separable from the holistic experience of the world.

This disruption of coherence and consistency has been studied as a disruption of the general temporal structure of thought, which would explain the experience of loss of control, as Parnas et al. (2005) argue. However, this happens in other phenomena, such as mind-wandering (Petrolini, 2020) and rumination in OCD experiences (Moore, 2016), although these are entirely different phenomena. Certainly, thought insertion is related to a lack of control over some thoughts, but the phenomenological differences between having an obsessive thought and an inserted one are evident.

A key difference is the feeling of alienness, of lack of familiarity with inserted thoughts. According to the patient descriptions, it seems that certain thoughts are experienced as not familiar because they stray from a link between subject and reality that other kinds of thought preserve, such as those of mind-wandering or obsessive rumination. Either wandering or obsessive thoughts participate in the structure of meaning in which thoughts considered to belong to the thinker are expressed, even if their occurrence is not under the patient's control. For example, in rumination, the obsessive thoughts are coherent with a patient's regular, anxious way of dealing with the world, even though the patient has a feeling of lack of control over them.

I posit that the reality expressed in specific thoughts causes the patient to experience them from the second-person perspective. This contrasts with the primal experience of thought contents from the first-person perspective. Thoughts from the second-person perspective contrast with those consistent with the historical relations of the subject and the world.

Since in an inserted thought, some meanings of a lifeworld are given in another body, and they are given as merely noticed (as opposed to a fully transparent experience of what is given to me in my lifeworld—this difference will become more apparent as we proceed). This noticing is not explained merely by the fact that the voice in question is perceived from the outside—as if the difference between alien thoughts and my own were based upon material qualities, which is certainly not the case; it has to do with the fact that the voice expresses a different lifeworld from my own, even though this voice is, paradoxically, within me: and this even accounts for a different materiality in the alien voices. When an inner voice asks the patient to kill himself, that voice rings

foreign, not merely because of its tone or volume, but rather because that tone or volume, together with the meaning of the words, brings forth a different lifeworld. In a single declarative or imperative sentence, another's voice brings forth different habitualities, historicities, and horizons of meaning rooted in a different living body.

It is important to specify that although the alien voice or alien thought is experienced from within (and, in that sense, we could say that the thought or inner voice is spatially "here"; indeed, in the very place where one's thinking occurs) it is experienced as corresponding to another body. In Husserl (1989a) and Merleau-Ponty (2012), the body appears as the *Nullpunkt* of experience. First-person and second-person experiences are related to indexicality (personal conscious life occurs "here" and second-person experiences "there"), and this has to do with the placement of the bodies (mine is "here," other bodies are "there"). Whereas the spatial nature of experience is related to the perspective in which average experience is given, in the pathology, another may occupy the physical position of my own body. The spatial "here" does not correspond to the experiential "here", that is, what is in accordance with my own history and the meanings I have given to the world.

What makes inserted thought alien is that what is expressed is apprehended as an alien lifeworld—and therefore, it is experienced as coming from "there." However, it occurs in the spatial "here." The experience is disquieting precisely because, although I do not perceive a voice, it points to the experiences of another, which usually only happens when I perceive another's voice. There is something in inserted thought that implies a disintegration of my own lifeworld; therefore, this delusion is connected to the problem of the constitution of the unity of lived body and world and not merely to the problem of mine-ness.

What distinguishes inserted thoughts from ordinary thoughts is neither an intrinsic quality of the inner voice nor our incapacity to control them; instead, it is the lifeworld they express. When we say that a voice or facial expression is experienced in the second person, it is precisely because, rather than pointing us to another mind, this expression points us toward the meanings given to the world by another body.

Like perceiving, thinking is a way to express a lifeworld. Through inner language (which does not have quite the same structure as verbalized language; see Ratcliffe, 2017), thought brings forth a world, not only through the meaning of words but also in the way things are expressed. Moreover, when expressing a world, thinking appears to have a first-person quality of intimacy, which does not require an additional reflexive consciousness.

Let us turn to thoughts that are considered alien or inauthentic. It is unclear whether inserted thoughts always appear with the materiality of a voice heard or that inserted thoughts are always produced by a source that can be identified (Henriksen et al., 2019, p. 5). Therefore, we must

inquire into the constitutive dynamics of inserted thoughts and what it means, in a fundamental sense, to experience a thought as alien.

What is disquieting about a thought such as "You have to kill yourself" is that such a statement brings forth several internally related meanings that contrast with the historicity of the patient's experiences. The statement—in a given tone or volume— brings forth an affective atmosphere, a set of images of meanings related to life and death that contrast with the patient's lifeworld, incoherent with her unity of world and lived body. "You have to kill yourself" is an expression that contains several meanings that are not those of my lived body: Self-hatred, a tendency to solve problems through violence, a familiarity with guns, etc., are meanings that are not directly given to me in the here. For example, Steele and Berman (2001) state that the voices in inserted thought contrast with the patient's introversion and shyness (see also Ratcliffe, 2017). What is unusual about such thoughts is the contrast between the first-person lifeworld and the affective experiences and meanings associated with the inserted thought; for example, "Kill God" in a patient who is peaceful and would generally find the idea of murdering God unthinkable, or in an atheist patient.

Patient reports are congruent with what I have proposed. Thoughts are reported as inauthentic: "It is just like my mind working, but it is not"; "It is like hearing someone else's voice in my head, generally saying something that does not "sound" like my own thoughts or interior monologue" (my emphasis). Thought insertion would be similar to the experiences of people with schizophrenia or those induced by psychoactive substances (Shannon, 2003) in which part of the body's sensibility is lost, or there is a reflective feeling that the body goes its own way separate from the mind (as in the delusion of control, Krueger and Henriksen, 2016).

As an example, if I am thinking about going grocery shopping and what to get, I experience these thoughts as my own because they are linked to my historical lifeworld, in which a concrete supermarket, some concrete products, etc., are linked in a meaningful whole: my lifeworld, mentally expressed. This lifeworld has a particular affective atmosphere: I may think I will wait for my husband to help me, but then I am annoyed that perhaps he will come home too late, and the store will be closed. Now imagine that in the same tone that I think about grocery shopping, I think, "I should go to the supermarket and kill everyone," or I start dancing: Indeed, such actions would not correspond to the whole experience of myself as embedded in a particular situation; therefore, I constitute them as alien.

Conclusions

The theory of thought insertion presented here has four main conclusions:

1) In a typical experience, what is expressed in thinking appears as given from the first-person perspective because it is entirely available (where availability means that thoughts are related to the historical unity of my lived body and the world as it is given to me). Here is not a spatial

property of thoughts but an experiential sense of thoughts related to my lifeworld. Thinking about shopping, the supermarket I usually go to, and even the annoyance at my husband's late work are all linked as nodes in a network that constitutes my lifeworld. On the contrary, what is expressed in inserted thought is not completely available; therefore, it is experienced as corresponding to a different, inaccessible historicity, giving it the quality of being from the second-person perspective.

2) Thought insertion is explained by the presence of a second-person perspective rather than a loss or alteration of a sense of agency. There is a widely accepted explanation of thought insertion based on the loss or a lack of sense of agency (see Table 1). However, such a lack of agency seems to be shared with other experiences, such as mind wandering. Both wandering and inserted thoughts appear disconnected from the flow of experience, but while wandering thoughts always lack control, this is not a rule in thought insertion; according to the literature, inserted thoughts are generally controlled, although the locus of control seems unrelated to the self. Wandering thoughts are related to one's lifeworld (however messily); on the contrary, inserted thoughts are related to a different lifeworld and are experienced from a second-person perspective.

3) When examining the intentional (and constitutive) structure of delusional consciousness, we may find some elements that alien thoughts share with other intersubjective experiences. According to Merleau-Ponty (2012), the qualities of language, like bodily expressions, are manifestations of consciousness. Steele and Berman (2001) point out, for example, that the voices that call for suicide do it in an irascible or mocking tone. The aggressiveness associated with this kind of expression, a cold and cutting tone of voice, is a characteristic that I not only identify with an alien voice but that is alien precisely because what is expressed through it comes with a particular affective atmosphere. I might say the same thing in a jocular tone, but the irascible tone makes it clear that it is produced by another. In this patient, social anxiety and thoughts related to fear of others are given in the first person, while prosodically derisive voices appear as opposed to such feelings; they do not come from here but from there.

4) To understand inserted thoughts, we should focus on how their strangeness is experienced. It is easier to describe the intimacy or mine-ness of our ordinary thoughts than it is to explore otherness in thoughts because it is an unusual occurrence outside of psychotic experiences. In order to overcome that challenge, it is necessary to interview patients in such a way that what is alien about inserted thoughts is brought to light. Rather than asking whether a thought appears to come from the outside or from within or whether the patient has control over the thought, the interviewer should invite the patient to articulate what he finds strange about what is expressed in inserted thoughts. Rather than asking whether "Kill God" was an outside voice or an inner thought, the interviewer should ask if such a thought's occasion, tone, and general affective atmosphere feels right, allowing the patient to explore how such a thought is alien to his own lifeworld. This is in accordance with classical views of psychopathology, such as that offered by Jaspers (1997), who

recognized that delirium should be seen as a disruption of the relation between subject and reality and not as a phenomenon that can be isolated from the broader life experience.

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