

Discussing creativity from a cultural psychological perspective

Alex Gillespie, Cor Baerveldt, Alan Costall, James Cresswell, Constance de Saint-Laurent, Vlad Glăveanu, Vera John-Steiner, Sandra Jovchelovitch, Keith Sawyer, Lene Tanggaard, Jaan Valsiner, Brady Wagoner, and Tania Zittoun

Alex Gillespie: Each of the forgoing chapters has advanced differing aspects of the cultural psychology of creativity. In this final chapter we aim both to synthesize what has been written and also catalyze future directions for research. To achieve this aim, we are harnessing the creative potential of social processes by jointly writing the chapter as a dialogue. The questions addressed will be first, what is creativity from a cultural standpoint, and second, what implications might this standpoint have for intervention, methodology, and future research.

Keith Sawyer: Many people believe that creativity is generated by solitary individuals, a ‘lone genius’ view of creativity. And yet, all of the research, including historical, biographical, and empirical social sciences research, shows that creativity never comes from solitary individuals. Creativity always emerges from collaborative groups, conversations, and social networks. This is why we need the cultural psychological perspective: to help us explain the social interactions that generate creativity. In particular, the cultural psychological perspective is essential in analyzing and explaining how creative breakthroughs emerge over time, over weeks, months, and years.

Brady Wagoner: Keith makes the important point that cultural psychology sensitizes us to social relations and emergence over time as key to understanding creativity. The issue of time makes me wonder if we might do better to talk about the ‘creative process’ or ‘creative action,’ than ‘creativity’ as such. The term ‘creativity’ encourages us to think of it as a thing, which either resides in individuals or is an end product of their interactions. What we should be focusing on, from a cultural psychology perspective, is creativity as a complex ongoing process, oriented to an open future, in which social others and cultural tools directly participate in and are constitutive of. A similar move was made in another research context by Frederic Bartlett (1932/1995), who began to talk about ‘remembering’ rather than ‘memory.’ In other words, he aimed to move away from studying a mental faculty, and instead focused on exploring remembering as a complex activity, occurring in time and incorporating multiple processes, the most important of which are social and cultural.

Alan Costall: “Like other learned branches, psychology is prone to transform its verbs into nouns. Then what happens? We forget that our nouns are merely substitutes for verbs, and go hunting for the things denoted by nouns; but there are no such things, there are only the activities that we started with, seeing, remembering, and so on” (Woodworth, 1921, pp. 5–6).

Unlike the adjective ‘creative,’ the noun ‘creativity’ only gained wide currency in the 1950s (see Google nGram, Michel et al., 2011). The noun form has encouraged researchers to hunt for the ‘thing’ it is supposed to denote, to present us with theories about ‘it,’ and on the basis of these theories, to find ways to enhance ‘its’ performance.

In my chapter (Chapter 4), I did my best to avoid ‘creativity’ and talked instead of ‘creative activity.’ There are, of course, a wide diversity of different activities people engage in. There are also a wide diversity of ways of being creative in relation to any one activity, including ways that so radically transform a practice that the new ‘creation’ may not be recognized, at least initially, as part of that very practice. In this sense, we must recognize that the word ‘creative’ is an evaluative term, and perhaps an even ‘essentially contested’ term (Gallie, 1956).

One additional point: Several chapters in this volume have emphasized the sociocultural preconditions of creative activity. But, there are also ‘post-conditions,’ that is to say, the emergence of something as creative also depends on how it is received by other people. George Herbert Mead talked of the “completion” of the meanings of what we do by the people around us (Mead, 1934, p. 78–9). As the saying goes, ‘It’s only a joke if somebody laughs.’ We now regard Alfred Wegner’s theory of continental drift as an exceptionally creative contribution to science. Yet for many years it was a rather bad joke.

Lene Tanggaard: I agree completely with Sawyer’s comments about the fundamental we-character of creativity/creative processes. No one ever invented the wheel alone (Ville, 2011).

I want to follow up on Alan’s comments relating to both the problems with the term creativity and its dark, other side. In the Danish language, the first usage of the noun ‘kreativitet’ (creativity) occurred barely 50 years ago, in 1964. Before 1940, however, it was hardly used outside theological discourses. Other nouns like ‘genius’ or ‘imagination’ seemed to capture those qualities which ‘creativity’ nowadays appears to stand for. As pointed out, there is a remarkable similarity between themes and topics in the ‘genius’ research from the nineteenth century and contemporary ‘creativity’ research (Albert, 1969). The current interest in creativity differs from earlier approaches to ‘genius’ in one important respect however: Creativity is today thought of as indispensable for the future prosperity of the knowledge economies. Creative skills and processes may be extraordinary, but it seems of great political and economic importance that everyone, not only gifted people, start acting creatively. In Csikszentmihalyi’s (2006) terms, creativity is “no longer a luxury for the few, but a necessity for all” (p. xviii). Furthermore, research by Amabile (1996) has revealed that creativity is better

understood as a relational process in social practices rather than being the mysterious product of an unknowable inner world. Formerly, there was a clear underlying assumption that creativity existed as such independently of social norms and cultural conventions. However, as stated by Glăveanu, there is currently within the literature great consensus that “something is creative when it is both: a) novel or original and b) useful or valuable” (2010, p. 102), which underlines the normative aspects of creativity.

The present definition of creativity in terms of novelty and usefulness exposes its cultural embedding and raises important questions about the processes by which people and products in communities of practice end up being called creative. However, we still do not know why creativity often gets destroyed rather than promoted and what happens when something ceases to be perceived as creative and innovative. Or do we?

Jaan Valsiner: Two levels need to be distinguished: One is *society’s accepted discourse* about phenomena of creative/innovation processes. This gives us recently established nouns, such as ‘creativity’ and construct entified ‘thing’ that the noun supposedly represents. Such ‘nouncing’ itself is not part of what it depicts. As Russell (1908) and Bateson (1955) have established, a category *label* does not belong to the category itself. For example, you cannot sit on the *word* ‘chair.’ From this viewpoint, the noun ‘creativity’ does not belong to the realm of *creative processes*. In fact it may be the end of such processes . . . imagine a suggestion to Picasso “you should be creative!”

The second level is that of processes that actually produce innovation, that is, creative processes. These can be explained in terms other than creating nouns for them (e.g. Baldwin’s (1894) concept of persistent imitation).

Vlad Glăveanu: Jaan makes an important point by distinguishing between creativity as representation and creativity as action. What I think is central for the cultural psychology of creativity is to study the way these relate (support each other, co-evolve, and, at times, generate tension and contradiction) at different levels: societal, ontogenic, microgenetic (Dunveen & Lloyd, 1990). A clear transformation in how both the creative agent and other people understand the practice of creativity takes place once the label ‘creative’ (or ‘original,’ ‘useful,’ ‘important,’ etc.) is attached or, more precisely, attributed to it. These kinds of attributions depend of course on larger systems of practice and representation, as well as the domain of the ‘product’ (ultimately, the social interaction that generates creativity, in Keith’s terms).

In essence, to understand that something is creative means to perceive it as new and of value for self and/or others. This judgment is not inconsequential for how creative work progresses. While some creators certainly benefit (e.g. become more motivated) from this kind of attribution, others struggle to attain recognition. This view is well inscribed in systemic models (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). The great contribution of the cultural psychology perspective is, above and beyond such

models, recognizing that creativity doesn't depend (only) on institutional recognition; representations of what is and what is not 'creative' are constantly being formulated and negotiated at different levels and by different people in concrete contexts such as families, schools, companies, and so on. From this perspective, creativity as representation does not only reproduce societal discourses but actively re-presents them and, as such, contributes to their ongoing transformation, as well as the transformation of actual creative action. That is to say, the two levels distinguished by Jaan, while being logically distinct, do impact one another. In the end, I agree with Brady and Alan that focusing on 'creating' rather than 'creativity' should be our aim, but we should also remember that 'creativity' (however we define it, as per Lene's reply) is actively involved in the act of creating and, itself, is the result of a 'creative act' (that of investing action with meaning).

What 'holds' creativity as representation and creativity as action together and integrates them? Perhaps something we unfortunately hear very little about in psychology, that is, 'creativity as experience,' which, in a cultural psychological sense, is not an intrapersonal but fundamentally shared phenomenon, developed at the encounter between person and world (Dewey, 1934).

Cor Baerveldt: By understanding 'creativity' as that which is both novel and useful, we understand it in terms that remain external to the creative process itself. I would like to challenge the assumption that novelty and usefulness are adequate criteria for deeming something creative. A dancer or a musician can creatively perform the same piece over and over again in a way that is 'fresh' each time it is performed. A society can repeatedly renew itself in a creative reenactment of the same myths. What makes each of those performances 'creative' is not that they are new and useful according to external social criteria, but that they are created anew with each performance. I think that this is also captured in Baldwin's notion of persistent imitation, referred to by Jaan. Genuine imitation is not just copying external behaviors or social conventions, but acquiring a generative principle that allows one to freshly express or perform those actions "in forms peculiar to one's own temper and valuable to one's own genius", to use Baldwin's (1911, p. 22) words. In other words, genuine imitation is creative, but not necessarily 'novel.' I would argue that it is only by acquiring the dynamic generative dispositions to creatively perform certain actions that we can potentially create something genuinely new. True creativity requires skills and proficiency and cannot just be a matter of accidentally stumbling upon something new that is subsequently recognized by others or society as useful. 'Creativity' gets lost precisely when we act only according to 'external' criteria, demands and conventions, without maintaining a connection to the 'inner' lived reality of the cultural competences we acquire. Perhaps that is precisely what Vlad calls "creativity as experience."

Tania Zittoun: I agree with many points raised. Rethinking creativity from a cultural psychology perspective emphasizes processes; instead of 'creativity' the focus is on 'creating,' as Brady, Alan and Jaan suggest. This approach also

emphasizes the social, cultural and historical dimensions. Additionally, this cultural approach should lead us to critically examine the social uses of the notion of ‘creativity’ itself. I want to highlight another aspect of a cultural psychology of creativity, a tension within the study of creativity which is implicit in what has been said so far, and perhaps present in the idea of ‘creative experience’ (mentioned by Vlad and Cor) and the examples introduced by Cor, namely the tension between shared and individual creativity.

An assumption from cultural psychology is that human experience is always already cultural. This assumption reveals, as has been emphasized, that human activity takes place in a social world, shared with others, within specific social fields and traditions – and so it is for creating as well as creativity. But another implication of this is that even the ‘solitary’ mind, to borrow Keith’s expression, is actually culturally and socially constructed. Hence, even when the person is thinking or day-dreaming alone in a room, they are still ‘cultural.’ This is because the stuff of one’s dreams, or the resources one uses to think or imagine, result from the internalization of cultural experiences.

My point is that we also need a cultural psychology of creativity to account for the fact that individuals alone can be creative/creating: this temporarily lonely activity is always and already taken in streams of social and cultural meaning and previous inventions. My worry is that, with an emphasis on shared creativity alone, or situated creativity, we will reproduce in the field of creativity psychology the same mistake found in educational psychology: for years, the emphasis on the socially situated nature of thinking and learning led to the gradual disappearance of the individual from sociocultural enquiry; there was ‘learning’ but no one, no person, to feel, hope, fear or enjoy its meaning.

Both Vygotsky (1931) and Winnicott’s (1971) understanding of creativity tries precisely to address this ‘internal’ moment or aspect of being creative/creativity, whilst still retaining a sociocultural focus. Both of them also fully acknowledging that being creative alone is always also and already cultural (“at the meeting of the person and the world,” in Vlad’s comment). These authors are also interesting for another reason: they would fully acknowledge the creativity of a repeated action. A repeated action is actually new in time and can be new in experience. As Winnicott (1970, p. 43) wrote: “In creative living you or I find that everything we do strengthens the feeling that we are alive, that we are ourselves. One can look at a tree (not necessarily at a picture) and look creatively.”

Hence, beyond the social and normative evaluation of what is creative for a society, perhaps there is space for cultural psychology to consider the individual evaluation of one’s own creative thinking as a dialogical, that is cultural, evaluation. In other terms, perhaps even little-c or daily creativity can satisfy the conditions of being also (experienced as) “a) novel or original and b) useful or valuable” (in Lene’s comment).

Alex Gillespie: There is evidently a healthy diversity in the cultural psychology conceptualization of creativity. Several dimensions have been raised: the focus

on ‘creating’ instead of ‘creativity,’ the focus on the social and historical context instead of just the individual (but, as Tania reminds us, the real challenge is not to ignore the individual, but to socialize the individual, to conceptualize even the solitary daydreamer is being creative through internalized social processes), the focus on the psychological processes instead of the outcomes, the focus on reproduction in novel contexts instead of novelty itself, and the focus on the way in which the representation of creativity (or creating) itself feeds into the process of creating. Each of these lines of argument points to the distinctive contribution of cultural psychology, but distinctiveness is not sufficient. As some would say with creativity itself, there also needs to be some utility, consequence or ‘upshot.’ In short, ‘so what?’

Accordingly, I invite you all to reflect on the discussion so far, to sort through our various conceptualizations, in terms of implications. Implications could be for theory (either for creativity research or for cultural psychology), for methodology (how might sociocultural concepts be operationalized? Are there existing sociocultural research methods which could be used?), or for enhancing creativity (What practical advice would we give to stimulate creativity?). Or, does rethinking creativity from the standpoint of cultural psychology lead to new questions?

Brady Wagoner: Let me pick up the question about practical advice to stimulate creativity. In my chapter (Chapter 2), I develop a notion of culture in which items always take on meaning through by being placed within a wider social framework, vis-à-vis other cultural items. Being socialized into a culture involves learning to make these connections automatically. Creativity can emerge from intentionally placing an item within an incongruent cultural setting. Literary critic Kenneth Burke (1964) gives the example of placing a lion in the category of ‘big dogs,’ in order to see them in new light, a strategy he called ‘perspective by incongruity.’ Similarly, scientific breakthroughs often occur by utilizing novel metaphors to develop models of some phenomenon (Dreistadt, 1968), such as the solar system in the Rutherford-Bohr model of the atom. Furthermore, there is a sense in which creative developments in science are often brought about by people who move between the boundaries of different disciplines. Vygotsky’s move from literature to psychology is a nice case in point (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991). Thus, creativity here involves making connections between items of culture normally kept strictly apart. In other words, innovations can be expected to happen on the margins, or more specifically, in moving between the center and the margins.

Vlad Glăveanu: Following Brady’s observation that creativity involves making connections between items of culture normally kept strictly apart, I think that one key contribution cultural psychology can make is to recognize that what is being used within creative work as well as the outcomes of this work are in fact part of culture and expressive of it. This may initially sound trivial but it has very deep consequences. Instead of looking at combination, selection, divergent thinking, and so on, as processes taking place ‘in the head’ of the creator we are able, within

this new paradigm, to locate them in a relational space of connections between people, cultural domains, and artifacts. Considering creativity a distributed cultural act (also Glăveanu, 2011), something that emerges strongly from each contribution to this volume, is a powerful idea that has numerous methodological and practical implications.

For the former we can think about how most methods used to study creativity in psychology focus almost exclusively on the individual. With the exception of case studies, biographical research, and historiometry, the dominant psychometric and experimental approaches cut the person from their context and focus primarily on psychological processes or features of the object. Cultural psychology, with its emphasis on ecological and longitudinal research, has a great contribution to make here. To capture the cultural nature of creative acts and outcomes we need to expand our vision in ways that incorporate the normativity and openness of symbolic forms (Baerveldt & Cresswell, Chapter 7 in this volume; Wagoner, Chapter 2 in this volume), development and life trajectories (Zittoun & de Saint Laurent, Chapter 5 in this volume; John-Steiner, Chapter 3 in this volume), materiality and affordances (Tanggaard, Chapter 8 in this volume; Costall, Chapter 4 in this volume). Simple paper-and-pencil tests asking respondents to generate as many new ideas as they can tell us very little about the above (although this testing practice and its outcomes can and should be interpreted in cultural terms!).

Finally, the understanding proposed here necessarily shapes the practice of creativity and gives us new practical means to act in the world. If the idea of differences is fundamental for creative action (Glăveanu & Gillespie, Chapter 1 in this volume), then the first step towards enhancing creative potential is to recognize such differences, to become aware of them. Culture, again, gives us ample opportunities to do this by presenting us with so many instances in art, science, and everyday life, where we are faced with discrepancies, ambiguity, ruptures. Exploiting the creative potential behind such contexts can become a point of focus for creativity researchers and cultural psychologists alike.

Lene Tanggaard: Based on my research on creative learning processes, I have during the last five years been involved in workshops with more than 100 schools and organizations. Drawing on my experience from this work, it is my impression that most people in these contexts (be it teachers, students, managers, or employees) are very concerned with questions like, for example: how to make students work more creatively in the real-life context of school or education and/or how to organize events and tasks so that the work contributes to the ongoing activity in the case of particular tasks. Working with these questions in close collaboration with practitioners, I have drawn two major implications from a cultural psychological approach to creativity.

First, we need to move away from thinking exercises. Based on the often very individualistic approach to creativity as outlined by Keith and Vlad, many schools and organizations tend to suggest to me initially that creativity must be enhanced basically by teaching individuals how to think creatively. However,

while recognizing that creative processes do involve thinking, I believe this is a way too restrictive approach to creativity as it often results in spending a lot of time on divergent thinking tests or exercises often disconnected from daily working practice. That is, I believe creativity must move back into everyday life in schools and this requires us to work with more culturally, socially, distributed models of the process. From this perspective, there is in principle no contradiction between working with grammar in a language session and enhancing the creativity of the pupil (Tanggaard, 2014). This is based on the premise that using language creatively does involve a certain level of mastery of basic principles, or as Vygotsky (1978) claims: All inner psychological processes have, in their first instance, been social. Creativity entails knowledgeability, meaning mastering the tools with which to work creatively. On a very practical level, helping schools to work with these perspectives would involve teachers and psychologists becoming experts in judging the potential creative learning processes involved in particular projects or lessons in school, rather than spending time on administering tests or isolated exercises on divergent thinking.

Second, interventions should be based on what people are already doing. One week ago, I spent three hours in a workshop meant to enhance creativity. I was participating as a board member in an organization called The Wave, being part of Kulturby Aarhus 2017. Our job was to come up with ideas for a big event in Aarhus in 2017 involving more than 5,000 young people in the campus area of Aarhus University. The consultants who ran the workshop kept saying “Now, think out of the box” and “Come up with as many ideas as you can.” The dean from Aarhus also told us to break boundaries. While I was sitting there, I felt I was wasting my time. When the consultants said think out of the box, my mind moved into the box and as the dean told me to break boundaries, I came to the conclusion that breaking all these boundaries might be part of the problem. Why not work within boundaries? We were told nothing about the overall frame of the event or what the organizers already knew, and in my group, members voiced criticism concerning what would happen with our ideas and if we would be told about the work after the conference. We did have fun and were served nice fruit, coffee and cake, but the event was disconnected from both the organization process and the future actuality of the event. Again, working from a cultural psychological approach, I would frame such events differently. I would base them very clearly on what there is already. I would maybe even suggest particular ideas with which to work and I would draw a precise plan for the future work. Put simply, too many so-called creative workshops work in thin air without a clear foundation and I guess this is a possible implication drawn from working with creativity as isolated, mental processes which can materialize everywhere, regardless of content, culture, and social processes.

Tania Zittoun: The cultural psychology approach to creativity has implications for how we study it, that is, for methodology. I agree with many of the propositions made, and mainly want to emphasize one aspect already raised. The main

idea is, I think, to open the scope of investigation and action: if one wants to understand creative activities, one has to look beyond the person or group in space, towards the wider social, material, cultural settings. Also, we need to look beyond the moment of the specific creative process, and see a longer temporality.

I agree with the papers gathered in this volume which suggest that rich case studies, or ideographic approaches, are central to a cultural psychology of creativity. The case studies would need to be over a long duration, covering a diversity of settings, and paying attention to a diversity of actors and artifacts. In effect, many chapters in the book suggest the importance of documenting the trajectories of creating X. In Lene's chapter, or Vlad and Alex's, creating is spread over a long period of time, and often the origin of the actual creating is far beyond the observable process (e.g., a person's childhood). Second, in order to account for recognition by others, the chapters in the book also suggest that the scope of an observation might be quite broad, so as to identify real and imagined others that participate in the trajectories of creativity. Third, given the importance of the psychological time-space of creating, case studies should document the conditions or mediations facilitating imagination, trying-and-failing, and so on. Hence, in Lene's chapter and ours, the creating person is asked to keep a diary, which opens a very specific symbolic space allowing and supporting reflexivity and the creative process. Also, Brady, in his chapter, reminds us about the dream-space. Case studies can document the variations of phenomena along dimensions such as these (but also others).

The implications of a cultural psychological approach for enhancing creativity are not strictly linear, but might be precisely about paying a special attention to the conditions just mentioned: trajectories of creating X, involvement of the persons involved, creation of reflexive spaces, transitional spaces, with all this being of course extremely variable.

Keith Sawyer: I very much like Tania's phrase, "trajectories of creating X." All creations emerge over long periods of time, with many small moments of insight/ideation along the way. This view, of creativity as emergent over time, is quite different from the common view that creativity comes from a sudden breakthrough moment of insight which is disconnected from the social context. If the latter were true, then the proper method of study would indeed be to focus on the individual, and the cognitive processes and structures associated with that moment of insight. But all of the accumulated research on creativity converges on the 'trajectories of creating' view: that creativity is not due to an isolated cognitive moment that one could call 'breakthrough insight,' but rather creativity emerges over time, from long periods of hard work, collaboration, conversation, and idea exchange. At a broader level, creativity emerges from history, over historical time, and in many cases across multiple lifespans. And because this is the reality of how new things are created, the sociocultural approach is necessary. An individualist approach can, at best, help us understand one small moment of contribution to a very broad and complex trajectory. This, too, is valuable and worthy of scientific study, but I believe it will always be incomplete without the sociocultural approach.

Alex Gillespie: Tania and Keith emphasize the methodological implications of a cultural psychological approach to creativity, namely, that we should use longitudinal case studies. Brady, Vlad, and Lene show the practical consequences of rethinking creativity from the perspective of cultural psychology. Their suggestions include: Perspective by incongruity, crossing between domains and out to the margins, exploiting differences and giving up decontextualized creativity tasks in favor of working with people's daily practice to build creativity from the ground up. These fruitful suggestions also feed back into consequences for research, pointing towards new lines of theory and research. Consider the juxtaposition of difference. It is a mundane experience that conversations can be creative, that things can emerge which nobody knew beforehand. Yet, conversations can also be filled with platitudes, with repetition, non-transformative interaction and power relations which silence the play of alternatives. Certainly, if we were all the same, then social interaction or conversation would be unlikely to do anything for the process of creativity. But equally, not all differences enhance the creative process. Thus, the question emerges: what differences make the difference? Is there any way that we can begin to master, and make deliberate choices, about how best to marshal the differences between images, people, groups, meanings, and contexts?

Another line of research and theory is evident in Brady's suggestion that moving between contexts, between the center and periphery, can foster the creative process. The historical record does show that many 'great thinkers' moved between contexts and discourses that were in tension (Collins, 1998). My own view is that such movement is crucial to integrating and transcending productive differences (Gillespie & Martin, 2014). As Lene cogently argues, creativity begins with what people do in their everyday life, in concrete situations. But people are not bound to single situations or activities, rather, they move between domains of situated practice. For example, an academic might move between the situated practices of writing and peer-reviewing, between obtaining food in the canteen and preparing food at home, between listening to a lecture and giving a lecture, and between studying commuters and being a commuter and so on. In moving between these social contexts individuals internalize the differences of society, as manifest in diverse domains of practice. This movement overcomes the simplistic opposition between 'the social' and 'the individual' discussed by Tania above because it makes the individual societal: The individual, moving within society and between domains of practice, becomes the vehicle for the creative integration of societal tensions.

My emphasis, here, on people moving between contexts, I would argue, also chimes with Tania and Keith's insistence upon longitudinal research. People, artifacts and activities tend, at best, to be studied within contexts. But, more radically, we need to study people and 'trajectories of X' as they move between contexts.

In conclusion to both this chapter and this book, we should now turn to any neglected issues and also consolidating what has emerged, not only out of our

dialogue, but also the book as a whole. Accordingly, do contributors wish to make any final comments or ‘take-away’ thoughts?

Vera John-Steiner: I am in full agreement with the conceptualization of creativity as social, as constituted of processes, as everyday as well as transformational, as cultural and collaborative (John-Steiner, 2000). But I would like to add an additional concept to this discussion, namely, creativity as a network of processes, which include daily acts as well as sustained preparations and mastery for work, which requires innovative approaches. Recently, we have aimed at a more inclusive view of creative processes (Glăveanu, 2011) from one that is limited to well-documented lives of those engaged in transformations of their domains (Gardner, 1993). But this larger view, which emphasizes the wide prevalence of daily creative acts, can minimize activities such as culturally transmitted skills, the slow acquisition of disciplinary knowledge, and organizational strategies among other long-term joint endeavors. Creativity conceptualized as a network is made up of diverse processes, including rapid problem-solving aimed at everyday challenges; longer scientific, artistic, and commercial endeavors, which require division of labor and complementarity among the participants; and intergenerational, culturally constructed apprenticeships (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Part of the challenge is to rely on an interdisciplinary use of methodologies, including historical and anthropological tools. By basing ourselves primarily on the psychological tradition (although we reject psychometric approaches to the study of creativity), we limit ourselves to methods that have been successful in studying individuals.

Historical approaches and ethnographic analyses require a focus on time as a critical variable in examining the multiplicity of creative processes. Time plays a crucial role in the account of the development of Noma, documenting how its formation is linked to other major developments in the Nordic countries and elsewhere. But a more explicit inclusion of time and long-term creative activities is needed, I believe, in this emerging, cultural theory of creativity. A network approach, in addition to a definition that fits all creativity, may facilitate an analysis of commonalities and differences between short-term and long-term innovative and transformative activities. A systematic, non-individualistic approach to the study of creative processes is much needed. This book has initiated the complex tasks that such an approach calls for.

Sandra Jovchelovitch: I would like to flag up three theoretical issues which for me are productive points of tension opening up avenues for social and cultural psychology. These three paths for future exploration have been referred to above, in one or the other way, but deserve further elaboration.

First, the individual self and sociocultural context: There is little doubt that creative processes, as opposed to a reified notion of creativity externally defined by the social imperatives and dominant discourses of the day, are intrinsic and fundamentally a work of sociality and, in particular, sociability, the play-form of social life in which individuals enjoy the pleasure of togetherness and can imaginatively

detach themselves from asymmetries, roles, and power. Sociability was discussed by Simmel (1949) as the form of sociality related to play and the imagination. It refers to the sheer joy of being with other people in friendship, in community, in love, in fun, in productive work, in acts of creation. Such a kind of togetherness is very much linked to Winnicott's (1971) potential space, where being alone in a zone of symbolic detachment is only possible because of the scaffolding of a positive sociality – sociability – that enables the individual to be. In this sense, Tania's point is paramount: any substantive social and cultural psychology must face head on the space of individuality, the area in which self is with self and thinks as a self in relation to others and the world. In the head means internalization of what happens between heads, but there is an 'in the head.' The particular insight of socio-cultural psychology resides in the understanding that the internal is shaped by the external and vice versa. This is true for creativity as well. Independence from the situation and from the immediacy of the environment, freedom of judgment, freedom for recombining, juxtaposing, and reinterpreting elements of the world are processes scaffolded by social life and enacted by selves. I think we need to conceptualize this inner lived reality in Cor's words and the 'internal' moment of the process (in Tania's words). I see this challenge as a promising avenue for a cultural psychology of creativity.

Second, tradition and innovation, the old and the new: The tension between what is established and routinely exercised and the not-yet is a central tension of creative processes and I am in full agreement with Vera's point. The novel *My Name is Red*, by Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk, introduces a wonderful account of the nature of Ottoman art, as the capacity to create and renew the continuity of tradition. For this, the author must obliterate himself, engaging in a huge creative effort. This differs fundamentally from Western art and its preoccupation with the individuality, detachment, and originality of the author. In each – East and West – there are different ways of realizing the subjectivity of the author, but both refer to the fact that all novelty comes out of an established platform of traditions that provide the framework for our thinking and for our actions. That these platforms vary and thus provoke variation on what is considered creative should be part of a theoretical model offered for a cultural psychology of creativity. Novelty and difference are important, but for some cultural traditions novelty does not constitute a criterion for the creative because sameness and continuity are what matters. Sustaining cohesion and homogeneity is pretty hard work; traditional cultures are immensely creative in the ways in which they do that. Cor wrote above that "a society can repeatedly renew itself in a creative re-enactment of the same myths." This is particularly true in the Brazilian public sphere for instance, where a polyphasic mythology of origins has been reinventing itself in a thousand guises throughout history (Jovchelovitch, 2012). The tension between tradition and innovation in creative processes takes us back to cultural representations of creativity and the exchanges between creativity as action and creativity as representation. A cultural psychology of creativity must go beyond Western discourses about the creative and engage with its manifold modalities of realization in different parts of the globe.

Finally, the role of practice, repetition, skills, vis-à-vis working in ‘thin air’ (in Lene’s words) or out of a box: This is something Vera also highlights above. The imagination comes out of sustained experience, according to Vygotsky; it requires broadening of experience, it requires active engagement with the task, and sometimes resilience to bear the boredom of repeating the task, and the burden of training. Here, I think of Boesch’s (1993) article the “Sound of the Violin”; the Suzuki method, endless practice, being with others, disciplinary practices, and so on. Enlightenment comes to those prepared and that is why education matters.

In a way these three avenues come together is Vygotsky’s idea of recombining, which is about what the mind does to what is already there, the freedom of the mind to mess with the world and the given. This is in my view where Vygotsky continues to meet Freud, Winnicott, and the deep psychology of symbol and signification. I so liked the point Brady makes about incongruence of placing; just try something that seemingly does not fit and see where it takes you, voilà, a new something out of an old wardrobe. Ultimately, the creative effort takes to its full potential the power of the symbolic function: condensation and displacement just as in dreams, play and all symbolic experience pertaining to the potential space.

Cor Baerveldt: I would also like to share one final consideration with regard to the relation between the sociocultural origin of all creativity and the unique contribution of ‘individuals.’ I think we all agree that creativity is a collaborative activity that involves historical practice, cultural skills, and multiple contributions extended in time. However, without wanting to bring back the mysterious genius of self-contained or independent individuals, I wouldn’t want to lose sight of what might be considered the more existential aspect of creativity. Creativity is not just a matter of finding novel or original solutions to problems, but also of envisioning new worlds and authentic ways of being. It seems to me that there is a difference between the kind of creativity involved in Vlad and Alex’s example concerning the invention of sticky notes and the kind of creativity involved in creative expression and art. Spencer Silver’s weak adhesive might be seen as a solution waiting for a problem, but only in hindsight, after the problem had already presented itself. Silver had very little riding on it. His very identity was not at stake. There was no existential risk involved. But an artist like Cézanne, who envisioned an entire new style of painting, had to express his new vision, risking his self and sanity, without knowing if this vision would ever take root in the consciousness of others. I agree with all that has been said in this discussion about the temporal, distributed, and ‘marginal’ nature of creativity (e.g., Vera, Tania, Keith, Vlad, Brady), the importance of open and reflexive spaces (e.g., Tania), and the role of training, skills, practice, repetition, and apprenticeship (Sandra). It seems to me, however, that expressive creativity must also involve an element of existential risk, an authentic moment of escaping mere conventionality (what Heidegger calls “das Man”). To be sure, such authentic moments could only happen for someone who sufficiently masters the normative skills of an expressive domain or cultural practice. As Sandra puts it so eloquently, “Enlightenment comes to those prepared.” I don’t

think those existential moments are reserved for great artists and cultural masters. We all continuously face the challenge to express ourselves in ways that are both recognizably meaningful and ‘authentic.’ Even traditional, non-individualist societies require rituals and practices to renew and authenticate their normative fabric. I tend to associate creative conduct with this kind of authenticity (whether we genuinely connect our cultural competence to the generative sources of our character and our culture) more than with its presumed novelty in the eyes of a general or anonymous public.

James Cresswell: An emergent theme in this volume is the idea that creativity is an irreducibly social phenomenon. Authors herein argued that it is marked by a generative expression of style that is both unique and normative at the same time. This claim expands upon the idea that creativity is distinct from something that is just different or merely novel happenstance. Creativity seems better than novelty and involves an evaluative judgment. That is, there seems to be something better to a creative act and the question is: How do we mark that better-ness? Insight into this question comes from William James’ pragmatism and the idea that truth is something that satisfies us.

Linking truth to creativity would seem ill placed if we think about truth as an abstract claim about something, such as a general covering law. This approach is not what James (2011) had in mind with his conception of truth. He argued that truth is always inextricably bound to concrete life insofar as people do not use truth in an abstract sense. To find a general immutable truth claim about creativity is ill conceived because people talk about some-*thing* being truly creative. Consider the illustration of the Post-it® Note from the introductory chapter (Glăveanu & Gillespie, Chapter 1). This thing was considered truly creative via the relations among the emotional valuation of an object, the object, and the use of the object in life including the problems that it solves and function that it serves. These moments’ interrelations all play a part in saying that the Post-it® Note is truly creative. Truth is not separate from the thing or the life that we experience.

For something to be creative means that it must resonate with such lived experience, and herein lies satisfaction (James, 2011). James placed experience at the forefront of this work and pointed out that life is a series of experiences where one thing leads to another. We live in an interconnected experiential web of things and ideas (past, present, and anticipated). James’ view of truth was that something is true when it fits into the flow of life and the complex web of interrelations constituting experience. There is a sense of satisfactory peace and rest when something fits with lived experience (James, 1912). The Post-it® Note, for example, did not originally fit with life and it could not initially be truly creative. At the moment that it fit the flow of experience, it ceased being a useless novelty, and became something that was creative.

A charge that was leveled against James could be leveled against us at this point and it is that of solipsism. I have outlined a theory of what makes something truly creative and it relies upon notions like experience and satisfaction,

which could be understood on subjectivist grounds. James repeatedly argued that a pragmatic conception of truth was not solipsistic and that truth is not a matter of the mere proclivities of subjectivity (1907, 1912, 2011). He did so in a way that radically resonates with the intrinsic sociality integral to the chapters in this book. He made the claim that standards of satisfaction are socio-normative, that lived experience is action in the communal phenomenological world because people believe that their precepts possessed are common (1912, p. 27) and they are such within a community. For James, experience was deeply entwined with the world and with others with whom we are engaged. The implication is that any conception of creativity needs to assume the intrinsically social and cultural constitution of experience.

Constance de Saint-Laurent: I completely agree with James' comments, although I believe that the question of the 'subjectivity of truth' that pragmatism raises could actually be beneficial to a theory of creativity. We can indeed equate creativity to pragmatic truth, on the grounds that human experience is forever changing, and thus any adaptive reaction is novel (see for instance Bartlett, 1995), and that both are 'solutions' to practical issues. One interesting point raised by Cornish & Gillespie (2009) on pragmatic truth is, however, that instead of making of it something forever subjective on which no criteria of validity can be applied, it forces us to ask: To whom is it useful? Therefore, it may be more appropriate to ask of any given cultural artifact, who is this useful and/or novel for? Instead of trying to find a criterion to define novelty and usefulness in absolute terms (which for me can never be more than a more thought-through version of what is done in creativity tests), there is a case for situating that utility and novelty in the domain of practice itself. This brings me back to the point raised by Jaan regarding the difference between creativity and creating: Is it not a matter of whose perspective you are taking on the situation? If we all agree on the fact that creativity is necessarily a social and material process, therefore involving more than a lonely creator, it also means that we need to understand creativity as a process including more than one perspective. As with any social act (Mead, 1977; Gillespie, 2005), creating cannot be summarized or reduced to a single perspective or position within the social act, minimally the creator or the audience, and I do not believe that one should be given priority over the other. Returning to the introductory chapter by Glăveanu and Gillespie, despite there being an irreducible gap between the perspectives of self and other, both perspectives are necessary for any creative action to exist.

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