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A Dialogical Approach to Creativity

Edited by
Mônica Souza Neves-Pereira
Marina Assis Pinheiro

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Palgrave Studies in Creativity and Culture

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Both creativity and culture are areas that have experienced a rapid growth in interest in recent years. Moreover, there is a growing interest today in understanding creativity as a socio-cultural phenomenon and culture as a transformative, dynamic process. Creativity has traditionally been considered an exceptional quality that only a few people (truly) possess, a cognitive or personality trait 'residing' inside the mind of the creative individual. Conversely, culture has often been seen as 'outside' the person and described as a set of 'things' such as norms, beliefs, values, objects, and so on. The current literature shows a trend towards a different understanding, which recognises the psycho-socio-cultural nature of creative expression and the creative quality of appropriating and participating in culture. Our new, interdisciplinary series Palgrave Studies in Creativity and Culture intends to advance our knowledge of both creativity and cultural studies from the forefront of theory and research within the emerging cultural psychology of creativity, and the intersection between psychology, anthropology, sociology, education, business, and cultural studies. Palgrave Studies in Creativity and Culture is accepting proposals for monographs, Palgrave Pivots and edited collections that bring together creativity and culture. The series has a broader focus than simply the cultural approach to creativity, and is unified by a basic set of premises about creativity and cultural phenomena.

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Preface

Creativity in dialogue. Creativity as dialogue. Creativity for dialogue. The present book offers a refreshing new look at all these themes and more. In doing so, it starts from the basic sociocultural premise that dialogue and creative expression are intrinsically connected. This is a theme that is rarely found in the psychology of creativity today, a field focused on its traditional vocabulary of novelty, originality, value, divergent thinking and openness to experience, among others. While this focus unpacks the psychological aspects of creating, it also disconnects creativity from what ultimately makes it possible—the social, material and cultural world inhabited by creators, their artefacts and their audiences. And this world, essentially, is made up of dialogues or the continuous exchange of ideas, objects, practices and worldviews that substantiates human forms of society. Instead of individualistic accounts of creativity, we are presented here with a new universe of signification. To create doesn't mean only to bring about meaningful novelties, for as important as these are, but rather to exist within a wide and dynamic network of self-other and self-culture relations.

The dialogical approach advances in this book had deep roots, yet the contributions included within its pages manage to advance our understanding of both creativity and dialogism. They remind us that while creativity is ultimately expressive of the self, the 'creative self' doesn't exist in isolation. On the contrary, its mere existence requires dialogue and social interaction, and the value of its contribution to the world is measured

precisely in how the self participates in these dialogues and interactions. We create with, for and towards others and, as such, the issue of otherness is as central to creativity as it is to the human self. This book usefully reminds us that differences, especially those between self and others, are a pre-condition for creativity. And these differences—and otherness itself—are engaged with by creating intersubjective and dialogical bridges between our experience of the world and that of other people. Mutual understanding is born out of these attempts to engage with the others and so is creativity. These stand together as two facets of the same coin.

And then there is the issue of ethics. A dialogical approach to creativity is not complete, we are reminded here, without a serious reflection on the rights and responsibilities of each dialoguing partner. If difference and diversity are at the heart of creative work, then we can never take them for granted. Indeed, a fragile equilibrium is revealed by the close analysis of dialogues in which self and other find the space to exist on their own terms and to resist each other's implicit or explicit attempts at appropriation. 'Domesticating' others and otherness are common practices in both interpersonal and societal exchanges; they rely on the establishment of monological relations in which the other becomes more like the self, and the other way around. A key lesson of dialogism is that authentic dialogues require tension and the emergence of novelty. And for these conditions to be set in place, we need an ethical way of relating to the difference others present us with. How we can understand, learn to appreciate and foster such creative differences is an important topic of the present book.

Taken together, the chapters you are about to read mark a double achievement. On the one hand, they offer us a new perspective on what it means to create, as a human being, in dialogue with self, others, society and culture. On the other hand, the different voices included in the book, both from Brazil and abroad, are in a dialogue of their own. I invite you, the reader, to enter this dialogue with the openness and engagement of someone who is part of the exchange and concerned by it. Recognising our own participation in dialogues about and for creativity is the first step towards becoming aware of the dialogicality of creative expression. The second one is, simply, to live by it.

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1

Introduction

**Mônica Souza Neves-Pereira
and Marina Assis Pinheiro**

This book was conceived from conversations, work meetings and mutual interests of the authors about the themes of dialogism and creativity. At the last meeting of ANPEPP—National Association for Research and Graduate Studies in Psychology (as per its Portuguese acronym), in Brazil, held in 2019, working in our Dialogical Psychology Group, we started to talk about the possibility of organizing a publication that addressed the dialogical dimension of creative processes, themes that we have been investigating for some years in our research groups and universities. Over time, the idea took shape, resulting in the book we present today, which translates moments of reflection, theoretical propositions, conceptual articulations of the authors, mostly Brazilian, about a psychology of dialogical creativity. Each author, from their lines of research, brings a

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valuable contribution that will allow us to think about this theme with greater mastery, depth and intellectual organization, thus configuring a theoretical and empirical advance in the field of creativity understood as a developmental and dialogical process.

Creativity is a relevant theme in all cultures. It is a phenomenon that mobilizes and leads individuals and groups towards the novel, the different, promoting changes in their personal, professional, social, cultural and historical lives. Creating is a key element for the occurrence of Self-achievement processes in its action in the world. Through the gestation of the novel, we produced conditions for the improvement of societies in an increasingly competitive and unstable world (Glăveanu, 2014, 2015; Glăveanu & Neves-Pereira, 2020).

The psychological mainstream has viewed creativity primarily as a cognitive, divergent and personological process, which is amenable to measurement, quantification and literal analysis (Neves-Pereira, 2018). Under this perspective, creativity shows itself more as a qualifying proposal for actions, processes and products than as a sociocultural phenomenon with a transforming impact on human developmental processes and generated in the I-Other interactions, in an alteritarian and dialogical way (Gillespie et al., 2015; Glăveanu, 2015). From children's games to innovative solving of scientific problems; from scribbling to the development of literary writing; from the active exploration of objects to the construction of cultural artifacts; creative processes take place in a subjective and subtle way, since they express themselves concretely and objectively in human experience. It is necessary to understand them in their developmental dynamics and their constitutive aspects, in particular, their dialogical dimension.

In this text, we assume an epistemological and theoretical intention in the investigation of creativity and its processes. We chose to look at this phenomenon through the lens of cultural theories of creativity, an interdisciplinary research area that allows us to take a complex approach to the phenomenon, where human development processes assume a leading role in the emergence of the novel, i.e., the creative act itself as a human production and expression. As a psychological resource, which develops throughout the life cycle, creativity can only be understood in relation to the ontogenesis of the individual and his/her dialogical interactions with the other, which is the foundation of his/her subjectivity (Bakhtin, 1993;

Brait, 2020; Linell, 2009). In order to better explore the interdisciplinary nature of creative processes, other areas of knowledge will be invited to take on this challenge; and, among them, we highlight the Bakhtinian dialogism and its consequences in the scientific field of psychology (Bakhtin, 1993, 1999, 2011; Hermans et al., 1992; Lopes-de-Oliveira et al., 2020).

The creative phenomenon has been investigated by cultural approaches from the individual's communication, interaction and action in a world of culture, semiotically mediated by social others, in alteritarian relationships, gestating the novel by means of different material, immaterial, imagetic and ideational forms (Gillespie et al., 2015; Glăveanu, 2015; Vygotsky, 2004). As a dialogical process, creativity is developed in the I-Other interaction, generating processes of otherness and social interactions where different positions and perspectives, assumed by the individuals, provide a space for the novel, the different and the unequal. The I and the Other, in interaction, in dialogue, in differentiated positions and perspectives, know and recognize each other, understand themselves and find themselves strange, repeat themselves and create themselves. (Simão, 2010). The process is always reflective, recursive, dynamic and dialogical. The I and the Other only exist in dialogue. They are the mind and the world in a relationship. Creativity, dialogism and culture are merged in the process of creation. Understanding the interactive dynamics of these phenomena in the individual's creative expression is a necessary and vital undertaking for theoretical and empirical research (Glăveanu & Neves-Pereira, 2020).

Analyzing intersubjectivity, temporality and language as meta-conceptual axes, throughout the development of creativity, expands possibilities and impacts on research, cultural practices and education (Simão, 2010). This discussion is intended to denaturalize the use of creativity as an adjective for actors or actions. It highlights the role of agency (actions) in the intersubjective cultural field, marking the uniqueness of creativity in the context and in relation to other psychological processes, such as, for example, learning, memory and perception. Over the last few decades, dialogism has gained ground in the psychology of development and creativity not only as an interdisciplinary area, but as an epistemic-philosophical model explaining the co-constitution

relationships of the I-Other mediated by life in social groups (Bakhtin, 1993, 2011). Creating is a relational human act, oriented towards the other and the future (Pinheiro, 2018; Pinheiro & Simão, 2020). When creating, the individual takes ownership of senses, meanings and multiple languages with a view to understanding, transforming and generating the novel (Valsiner, 2014; Pinheiro & Mélo, 2020). Creating is dialoguing, as it implies articulating multiple voices that inhabit the experience of each individual. It is in the I-Other relationship that the individual asks, answers, questions, agrees, disagrees, confronts, takes a stand, reflects and creates. It is also in this dialogical relationship that he/she builds himself/herself, besides creating his/her worldview.

Accordingly, the current work intends to contribute with a proposal for a conceptual-reflective construction that, originating from the dialogical perspective, offers plasticity to the most diverse fields that focus on the creative process, whether in the theoretical-methodological dimension or in experiences of communities of practice. When recognizing the dialogical, intersubjective (Rommertveit, 1976) distributed and cultural mark, this project is forceful in the understanding that monologism, as a self-centered and authoritarian discursive formation, generates affirmation and repudiation. These two ways of dealing with semiotic-cultural messages cause stagnation and close the individual's interactive system, condemning this symbolic material to extinction (Valsiner, 2014). Where there is monologism, there is no creativity.

Our effort to integrate creativity and dialogism in a theoretical corpus that opens itself to dialogue with other research strands in psychology, such as developmental processes, the dynamics of co-construction of the self and intersubjectivity, and the relationships of creativity with educational processes will be presented through the chapters produced by the authors and presented here. This introductory text will explore the contributions of different authors, in search of the construction of a web of shared meanings and senses, since all contributors work with cultural and dialogical bases of psychology, and that will allow us to capture the different views on a common psychological phenomenon without losing the richness of diversity and the search for coherence and possible theoretical generalization. The web metaphor is interesting, as it does not exclude the holistic and open dimension of the system and does not discard the

interdependent dimension of the processes that take place there. When touching any corner of a web, other areas will experience resonances, movements and touch signals. Totality and unity are related in complex and mysterious ways. This is the challenge we have at the moment: to contribute to broaden the understanding of the processes of human development and creativity from a dialogical perspective.

In **Chap. 2**, Mônica Souza Neves-Pereira and Marina Assis Pinheiro present the theme of the book by exploring the dialogical dimension of creativity and the relevance of ongoing investigations in this area in a text entitled “*Creativity and Dialogism*”. The objective of this chapter is to introduce the epistemological and interpretive foundations of creativity from the approximation of Bakhtin’s ideas, as well as those of other dialogical authors, to the theoretical models of cultural psychology that investigate the emergence of the novel. In this chapter, creativity is understood as a social, semiotic, dialogical and relational phenomenon, which develops through processes permeated by typical dynamics of the human psychic constitution itself. The philosophy of language, represented by the work of Bakhtin’s Circle, is invited to dialogue with a psychological science that opens up to jointly tread paths of convergence and sharing of axiological premises and concepts relevant to the investigation of the individual in the process of creation. The authors invite the reader to reflect, in particular, on the dialogical dynamics that constitute creativity, highlighting the great potential embedded in this perspective both for cultural studies on creativity and for the investigation of human development processes. Bakhtinian concepts will be problematized in a developmental analysis, building intra- and inter-theoretical bridges that help us to understand the creative phenomenon in development. This writing also emphasizes the ethical dimensions of the study of creativity in a dialogical perspective and its main premises about the place of alterity in the processes of creation not only of artifacts and cultural products, but especially in the construction of more solidary and utopically democratic forms of life.

In **Chap. 3**, entitled “*Dialogical intersubjectivity in creative processes: A theoretical reflection*”, the authors Marina Assis Pinheiro and Lívia Mathias Simão explore the relationships between intersubjectivity and creative processes. According to the authors, a point of approximation among the

several conceptions of creativity in psychology is the place both of the effects of action in cultural otherness, in terms of validation of the creative product (recognition and surprise), as well as the social dimension participating in its construction process. Nevertheless, the intersubjectivity at play in creative processes while being taken as a fundamental dimension of human experience seems relegated to certain nebulousness between metatheory and theory. It would be in the intersubjective sphere that we could locate the creative dynamics as a dialogical field marked by its reflective, embodied and affective face, irreducible to the commonplace of a supposed and illusory “meaning sharing”, as if the creative act were merely a meeting point of social relationships. This challenging aspect in research on the psychology of creative processes is a central axis in the Bakhtinian dialogical ontology that took creative action as a starting point and a permanent question of architectural return on the conditions of authorship. Thus, the chapter develops a reflection on possible meanings for intersubjectivity in dialogism implied in creative action and its main ontological and theoretical references.

Kleber Ferreira Nigro and Danilo Silva Guimarães bring a very original discussion in **Chap. 4**, entitled “*Creativity as resistance to survival: The music of the Oz Guarani anti-colonial Indigenous Rap group*”. The text brings dialogical articulations among psychology, esthetics and indigenous knowledge and registers the birth of a new indigenous RAP group called “Oz Guarani”. The RAP group is described in order to expose and discuss the creative process that emerged during an interethnic dialogical experience. Considering creativity as a quality of human action that takes place in a flexible, new and significant way in a given context, a critical stance was maintained by adopting dialogical and co-constructive approaches to creativity that comply with the multiple contemporary notions of society, humanity and nature. The accomplishment of an artistic project on the border between the Guarani-Mbyá and Hip-Hop cultures provided the possibility of experiencing an unusual collective creation made up of various stages. The option for a comfortable environment allowed a gradual attunement among the individuals in dialogue, until a sufficient intimacy was generated for mutual understanding. Therefore, the collective and intuitive construction of a method was the final stimulus for the creation of the first songs. We argue that by

accessing and understanding non-Western ways of being, thinking and creating, psychology can expand its theoretical-methodological horizon beyond its predominantly Eurocentric and sectional vocation. The collaborative process and the dialogical analysis of the Oz Guarani's lyrics led us to understand that art and creativity take on peculiar meanings in the context of the global South, often as resistance to survival, becoming weapons to fight dangerous Western forces.

The text entitled "*The birth of metaphors in northeastern "música repente": a proposal for dialogical analysis in the study of creative processes*", written by Nathália Albuquerque da Silva and Marina Pinheiro, makes up **Chap. 5** of this book. The chapter discusses the subjective-dialogical dimensions inherent to the emergence of metaphors in the context of "*música repente*" or viola singing, a form of improvised popular poetry originating in the Brazilian Northeast. In this study, the emergence of the living poetic metaphor is thought of as a marker of the creative dynamics where the singer's life trajectory and his/her personal culture; the poet's temporality and intuition in relation to the audience of his/her oral performance; as well as the esthetic sensibility and, simultaneously, the poem's know-how (metrics and rhymes); catalyze dialogical conditions of this artistic-cultural expression. The constructed data were interpreted with reference to four axes: dialogical alterities, temporality, esthetics and technique, which proved to be fundamental in the emergence of the poem, synthesized by the vivid metaphors constructed in the viola singing. This study stems from a research carried out by the authors and focuses on the creative process in a dialogical and cultural perspective, favoring an ideographic methodological approach through a case study with a participant in his daily context in "*Sertão do Pajeú*", State of Pernambuco. This study presents a methodological design that can illuminate other investigations focused on creative dynamics in the context of artistic expressiveness, besides developing an approach of dialogical analysis based on interpretive axes that capture the tensions that give life, within the theoretical field, to the intensities of symbolic-affective reality of the researched context.

In **Chap. 6**, authored by Angela Uchôa Branco and entitled "*Creativity, self-development and human values: A dialogical perspective for the promotion of a democratic world*", the author argues that conventional approaches

to creativity tend to consider it a phenomenon that belongs mainly to the domains of intellectual achievements and innovative productions. In this chapter, from a dialogical and cultural theoretical perspective, we will explore the motivational roots of creativity and their role, as a human value, in order to promote human development as a whole, especially with regard to the development of the dialogical self and the psychological dimension of ethics and morality. The interdependent and systemic relationships between the ontogeny of values and the dialogical self will be analyzed, defending the significant role of creativity to increasingly encourage the emergence of multiple affective-semiotic perspectives concerning moral issues and the self. Nonetheless, these pleromatic psychological processes need to flourish in contexts or structures characterized by meaningful dialogical experiences, which produce the appropriate conditions for the development of diverse, plural and democratic values and self-positions. In particular, it is argued that contexts such as families and educational institutions can, or should, be involved in encouraging cultural practices with this goal in mind. In a world still characterized by radical ideologies, fanaticism and intolerance, efforts to explore, investigate and create paths to promote values related to diversity, inclusion and multiple affective-semiotic perspectives make up a fertile space for the co-construction of individuals and democratic societies.

This book also has two commentaries on this volume that are renowned authors in both the studies of creativity and Cultural Psychology. Dr. Jaan Valsiner (on **Chap. 7**) and Dr. Robert Innis (on **Chap. 8**) comment on their questions and potentialities of the chapters covered in this work, thus indicating new perspectives and reading refractions on the web of knowledge and meanings about creativity presented throughout the book.

Accordingly, the book named *A Dialogical Approach to Creativity* contributes to the debate and the construction of knowledge and research in the area, based on the experience of Brazilian researchers committed to a dialogical psychology under construction, in an ongoing state of inconclusiveness. We would like to offer readers a greater familiarity with these theoretical references that we have been investigating, which emerge from distinct interdisciplinary fields, and that will be presented in an elaborate and thought-provoking way on the dialogical dimension of creativity in different domains of psychological research. We are concerned not only

with new emerging theoretical issues, but, especially, with the construction of a culture of care and responsiveness, referring the investigation of creative processes, which does not emphasize their uses and functions as adjectivization of cultural products and outcomes, but that value creativity as a cultural-intersubjective process that can be expanded from the dialogical grammar of creativity.

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2

Creativity and Dialogism

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Creativity and dialogism are broad concepts derived from different areas of knowledge and which have been found in different scientific arenas. These conceptual approaches are due to the richness and resonances of Bakhtin's philosophical enterprise and his Circle of interlocutors (Volóchinov and Medvedev) in the Human Sciences. The Bakhtin Circle's dialogical thought emerged from issues originating in literary criticism; reflection on the relationships between author and work; author and audience, as well as the inescapable responsibility to the act of creation; and that, consequently, through the verticality of his historical-materialist reflection, he promoted a philosophy of Being and becoming with others.

The work of these authors is inscribed in the history of Western thought not only for its linguistic legacy, but, in particular, for its dense

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and rich philosophical contribution that portrays a deep passion for the debate of ideas and for language as a constituent of Being (Faraco, 2017). In addition to the contributions of a philosophical and linguistic nature, Bakhtin's ideas and the Circle have produced an impact when appropriated by different human and social sciences, often interpreted in a simplistic or even reduced way (Fiorin, 2020). The concept of dialogism, central to the Bakhtinian work, is empowered in current times, in addition to exerting a fertilizing force for new ideas and conceptions about the processes of human constitution through language, impregnating the sciences of education, psychology, sociology and other areas. There is an enormous attraction in Bakhtin's ideas, which have seduced psychology in a very special way. We already have an emerging dialogical psychology, which begins to find space and interlocution when we discuss human development and its intricate dynamics and processes (Guimarães, 2019; Hermans et al., 1992; Lopes-de-Oliveira et al., 2020; Simão, 2010). The investigation of creative processes has also been feeding from this source.

Dialogism and research on creativity meet when: (1) we identify that Bakhtinian writing is born from the inquiry into the conditions and meaning of authorship in the play of forces of enunciative traditions involved in the most diverse forms of authoritarian stereotypy of social dynamics; and (2) when recognizing creativity as a phenomenon that necessarily implies, in a very particular way, the emergence of novelty and its alteritarian nature (recognition, strangeness, decentering), more or less subversive of sociocultural dispositions. Accordingly, the approach that sustains this book is given not only by ethically chosen epistemological affiliation, but also by the inexorably intersubjective, relational and situated quality of the creative process.

In this chapter, we intend to carry out a difficult task, which is to provoke an interlocution between the philosophical knowledge of dialogism and the scientific field of cultural psychology of creativity (Freitas, 2013). By inviting readers to reflect on the dialogical dynamics that constitute the creative processes, we open a space for communication between knowledge from different parenting. When we appropriate the Bakhtinian concepts as knowledge constituted in the philosophical and linguistic fields, displacing them for the scientific understanding of complex psychological processes, such as creativity, we run several risks, such as

reducing principles and concepts or even (re)producing theoretical and methodological inadequacies from the meeting of two distinct paths of knowledge construction. And we dare even more. It is our intention to bring Bakhtin's notions into a dialogical encounter/confrontation, internalized by psychology and creativity studies, in an attempt to build intra and inter-theory bridges that saturate and fertilize investigations in the field of the emergence of the novel. This discussion will not leave aside the ethical and aesthetic dimensions of the study of creativity from a dialogical perspective and its main premises about the place of alterity in the creation processes, not only of cultural artifacts and products, but especially in the construction of more solidary and utopically democratic ways of living.

For Bakhtin, science and philosophy are different fields of knowledge (Bakhtin, 1999; Faraco, 2017). The dialogical philosophies of language and authorship are critical of scientific positivism. In the ethical-responsible Bakhtinian perspective, the dichotomous separation between the world of life and science, between art and life, and even between life and science, are ways of making each of these spheres of culture sterile by subtracting their world of relationship, their tensions, their imbricated dimensions that are at the same time irreducible to each other. The desimplification of the responsibility that each one of these fields has for the other would be a form of epistemopathy, of becoming ill in the ways of knowing and responding for a world that is constituted by the holistic complexity of relationships. The atomizing mechanism of phenomena would be a way of science not having to deal with the concreteness of life and its transformation process. "It is easier to create without responding for life and easier to live without art" (Bakhtin, 2011, p. 32).

His work underlines an option for hermeneutic thought, through interpretive gestures of human phenomena, without any identification with the traditional scientific format of knowledge production. His intellectual work was aligned, much more, with what he called a "Science of the Spirit" (Faraco, 2017), an ontologically different science from the traditional one, with distinct objects and modes of inquiry far from the mathematized and positivist knowledge of science in general. Bakhtin did not live long enough to witness the emergence of idiographic and qualitative sciences occurring in recent decades (Brinkmann et al., 2014),

which gave us arguments and tools for the discussion intended in this work.

Idiography is a perspective of science that understands the process of generalization as centered on the continuous and discrete process of changes inherent to the singularity of phenomena (Salvatore & Valsiner, 2010). Seen in these terms, it is understood that the regularities, repetitions and grammars with universalizing potential only exist concretely in the transforming uniqueness of the individual who acts and constitutes a certain form of life. In the same way, a given way of life only gains its historical-dialectical concreteness through the actions of its actors.

With the consolidation of qualitative and idiographic epistemologies, especially in the field of human development sciences, the research scenario and theoretical knowledge became attractive and permeable to new ideas about the processes of constitution of the human being, welcoming plural theoretical and methodological positions. In current times, Bakhtin, perhaps, would not perceive such a distance between the ontological object of his interpretive philosophy and the ontogenetic conceptions of individual of semiotic approaches to human development (Valsiner & van der Veer, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). It is a question for which we will not have a response, but it encourages us to delve into the exercise of extraction and displacement from the original dialogism to the constitutive sociogenetic dimension of the human subject. Considering that our object of discussion, in this text, arises from the need to explain and understand a dialogical view of creativity, we will start from the conception of creativity practiced here and the heritage that we have to take advantage of Bakhtin's work and his Circle.

What Creativity Are We Talking About?

Creativity is a topic of great interest to humanity. The arts, literature, cinema and other aesthetic and artistic expressions have been working with this human dimension for centuries, exploring it as an actional field of its material and symbolic work. Psychology and other human sciences have been discussing this phenomenon from different epistemic, theoretical and conceptual positions and views (Neves-Pereira, 2018). The

conception of creativity that we will adopt in this work emerges from the sociogenetic bases of human development (Glăveanu, 2014, 2015; Glăveanu et al., 2015; Vygotsky, 1978, 2004) that understand this phenomenon as a superior psychological function (see Vygotsky, 2009) and also as a social, subjective, material, culturally mediated, dialogical, situated, contextual, relational and developmental process (Glăveanu et al., 2019). A broad-spectrum concept, such as creativity, makes a punctual, synthetic, summarized or even consensual definition very difficult. The creative process implies an alterity emergence of novelty from the nebulous field of meanings inherent to the interactions between the “I-Other”. In these interactional exchanges situated in creative dynamics, the function of context; the irreversible subjective and chronological temporalities; semiosis, the production of meaning and its innovative uniqueness signalize how the conceptual definition of creativity cannot abandon the holism involved in the multiple instances that (inter)act in it through the human actions in the world. Glăveanu (2021, p. 14) very well translates this diffuse, complex and challenging conceptual scenario:

There is no single, unified definition of creativity and this is certainly for the best. Instead of opting for one understanding or the other, it is better to consider each one as a facet of a complex phenomenon. The product approach helps us identify when creativity takes place and to compare creative products. Cognitive definitions tell us something about the creative person and the intra-psychological processes they engage in. Systemic and sociocultural reformulations help us consider the wider dynamic of creative expression beyond individual minds and point to the role played by the ideas of others and the broader culture.

The notion of creativity, central to any discussion on the topic, has been problematized in different ways. There are discursive elaborations that, in our opinion, bring novelties to this scenario, converging on what is intended to be explored in this text. Gillespie et al. (2015) conduct a collective discussion where the concept of creativity is questioned from a cultural perspective. The authors do not disagree about a vision of creativity that emerges from processes of social interaction, which can only be understood as a process in motion, in development, over an

ontogenetic and irreversible time and marked by specificities. Creativity is a process with human actions, which places it as a social act. It only exists when subjectivities interact, reconstructing cultural messages and meanings in the form of new material and symbolic productions that, in some way, are presented to the world in which we live. Creating presupposes that something was created with a brand of novelty, even when this novel is experienced only by those who created it, as if it were a “personal and non-transferable creative experience”, but genuinely original for those who experience it.

Glăveanu (see Gillespie et al., 2015) argues that creativity can be understood as a representation and as a process/action, a possibility that greatly expands our discussion. Given the dialectical, dialogical and dynamic nature of the creative process, the use of the term creativity reduces the complexity of the involved process, turning it into a label often without any scientific meaning or value. Valsiner (see Gillespie et al., 2015) has repeatedly taken this position. For this author, the concept “creativity” is just a name that does not define what happens from the moment one intends to understand the phenomenon. The term “creative process”, on the other hand, signalizes directions, paths, movements and temporality, configuring a conceptual option that better reflects and refracts the phenomenon itself. In this text, we will privilege the concept “creative processes” as the one that best represents our conception of the emergence of the novel. Nonetheless, the term creativity appears throughout the work, but always understood as a procedural system.

Once defined that the focus of analysis on the creative phenomenon will focus on its processes and dynamics, we will work with the sociocultural conception of the act of creating and its specificities. In this chapter, it is not our object to trace a historical line of the development of creativity, although it is relevant to follow the ways of understanding creative processes throughout human history. Nonetheless, it is important to emphasize that the conceptions and ideas about the act of creating, which we share today, emerged in the Renaissance, when the Gods and the Divine were displaced from creative action and man assumed his role in this latifundium (Glăveanu, 2021). From that moment on, the act of creating inspired different versions, concepts and definitions, highlighting human actions, initially carried out by brilliant men, who were linked

to some type of power in the social contexts they inhabited. This creativity focused on the individual characterized as genius or solitary author of relevant works does not represent the conception that we will defend here (nor does it represent part of the theoretical models in vogue in the psychology of creativity). Our interest is in investigating a social-relational, cultural, material, systemic, distributed, inclusive, non-discriminatory, ethical creativity that values all levels of people's creative experience throughout their development. Accordingly, it invests in an understanding of creativity that, as it is a human attribute, is inherent to human action.

Creating Is a Psychological, Social and Material Phenomenon

Creativity, understood from a cultural perspective, takes on different nuances from the psychological mainstream, implying the use of non-negotiable assumptions (such as the sociogenetic, symbolic and temporal dimension of the phenomenon), which define the phenomenon in a specific way. Understanding how these processes take place requires an epistemic and theoretical stance, followed by the defense of narratives that will support the emergence, permanence and consolidation of theoretical models that will explain the phenomenon (Neves-Pereira, 2018). Accordingly for cultural psychological bases, creating is a psychological (Vygotsky, 2004), social and material phenomenon (Glăveanu, 2014) generated in the I-Other interactions, managed by individuals immersed in culture and mediated by multiple contexts. It is a multidimensional phenomenon, i.e., it implies bodies interacting and moving throughout the life cycle, collectively sharing a world of materiality (objective and subjective) impregnated with sociocultural senses and meanings (Glăveanu et al., 2019) and creating artifacts, products, ideas and new experiences. These bodies are crossed by lines of sociability, materiality and temporality, being affected by emotions, feelings and values, as they move in different positions throughout the act of creating, building different perspectives on the phenomenon itself. The individual who creates does this with the other, in a relationship of alterity, crossed by what he/she is, by the dominant values, beliefs and emotions, in permanent

dialogue with the world, internalizing meanings, transforming them and returning all of this to the world in the form of a plural and diversified creation that assumes different values in the world (Glăveanu & Neves-Pereira, 2020).

Creating takes place, specifically, in the human ontogenetic trajectory. No other species is capable of operating this psychological possibility. It is a phenomenon that demands richness, plurality and creativity of methods to be investigated and understood, even if only in a small part. It includes, in its critical and social investigation, the economic, political, cultural, educational and ethical dimensions, as well as the dimension related to and values, dialoguing in an attempt to situate the phenomenon in light of its complexity. It is a polyphonic event, made up of multiple voices, which can be from the past, the present and those that inhabit the becoming, but are already heard by some.

Creating Is a Collective Act That Only Occurs in Alterity

It seems impossible to understand human development processes without the presence, mediation and interactions and relationships experienced with the other. The same applies to creative processes. How can creativity be thought of without the presence of another, even when the individual creates in the deepest solitude? The premise that alterity is a constitutive part of who we are is assumed in different theoretical fields, beyond psychology (Brait, 2020a; Bussoletti & Molon, 2010). But, after all, who is this other person who inhabits me, but who is also different from me? Why is this other a *sine qua non* condition for the co-constitution of the individual in the world of culture?

Cultural psychologists (Valsiner, 2014; Vygotsky, 1978) talk about alterity processes based on approximate concepts that reflect the co-constituting dynamics of the individual immersed in social, historical and cultural contexts. It is in the internalization of the sign (which is a cultural element) that the subject and the cultural other come together and collectively transform themselves, dialectically, into individual and unique syntheses. The other is a constituent part of what I am and this

construction takes place through semiotic mediation, the sharing of learned, lived and experienced meanings in existence. Between the I and the Other, there is a psychodynamic zone where the encounter of otherness mixes, collides, enters into conflict, in relation, in dialogue, thus promoting developmental transformations (Vygotsky, 1978). It is in this “in-between” I-Other that the subject-culture co-constitutive dance takes place; It is in this space that the dynamic mediation of signs builds hierarchies that will guide the individual in his/her human development routes, throughout his/her life course (Valsiner, 2014).

The emergence of something new, through acts, is only possible socially and collectively. Starting from the premise that no one creates from nothing, the other assumes an essential role so that the process of creating can take place. These interactive dynamics operate in indeterminate, obscure, unconscious, contradictory and profound dimensions, affecting the psyche, the body, the expressions in the world of individuals in acts of creation. When positioning itself before the other in plural ways, each being defines itself as a unique and non-transferable psychological, social and creative authorship. Bakhtin (2011) used to say that the gaze of the other is always different from my gaze, but I need this other gaze to see myself as different from what I am and what I see myself.

Creating Is a Culturally Mediated Act

Subject and culture are co-constituted. Subject has action over culture, and the latter impregnates and saturates experiences, messages, actions and meanings lived by individuals in their life cycles. This cogenesis takes place through mediation processes, where culturally channelled meanings and senses are internalized by the individuals, who transform them into knowledge, beliefs, values, self-view and world view, returning a new synthesis to culture, through of the resignification of shared signs. Cultural psychology (Valsiner, 2019) highlights the centrality of semiotic mediation as a dynamic process of internalization of signs and the axiomatic assumption of irreversible time in the existence of psychological, biological and sociocultural processes as epistemic and theoretical marks of the emergence of the individual. Creative processes also do not escape the

psychological dynamics of mediation, internalization and externalization, in order to take place.

Creativity and culture are also inseparable phenomena. Subject agents of creativity interact in different sociocultural contexts, operating with signs and instruments that are internalized, re-signified and returned to culture through creative acts (Glăveanu et al., 2019). In order to create, it is necessary to be in interaction with the other, in relationship with multiple audiences, oriented towards action and towards the future, impregnated with meanings, values and desires and immersed in the world, with its challenges and multiple cultural messages. The concept of culture is underlined by Glăveanu et al. (2019, p. 2):

In the socio-cultural tradition, culture and mind are interdependent and continuously shape each other. Culture is neither external to the person nor static, but constitutive of the mind and of society by offering the symbolic resources required to perceive, think, remember, imagine, and, ultimately, create. The notion of “creative action” tries to encompass, in this context, the psychological, the behavioral, and the cultural.

Creating Is a Situated, Contextualized and Perspective Phenomenon

Creative processes take place at different addresses. When creating, an individual “speaks” from a specific place, with particular psychological, social, cultural, political and economic marks. Even sharing sociocultural contexts, each human being configures a uniqueness, an unrepeatability singularity. The tones, the sounds, the modalities, and the intentions of the creative act will be, therefore, marks of this experience of being unique, inhabiting a plural world, where interactions and social relationships bring the senses, values, beliefs and knowledge of existence, which will be raw material for the emergence of the novel.

Creative acts are expressed as action, inter or intrapersonal experience, activities and products. Its expression is always crossed by the culture, language, values and characteristics of creative agents interacting with others, at a given time. These constitutive aspects of creativity make clear

its “situated” condition, which is positioned and viewed from different geographies, histories, languages, societies and cultures. The Bakhtinian concept of dialogue (Brait, 2020b; Faraco, 2017) presupposes subjects situated in different psycho-socio-historical-cultural positions, experiencing tensions, contradictions, conflicts and plural perspectives; beings who are in search of listening, voice and understanding of themselves and the world and, together, are co-constituted in their humanity and historicity. It is from the difference that creation is born, says Glăveanu (2014). The unequal is central in this process, allowing individuals not only to move throughout existence through multiple meanings of life, but mainly through contact with the different, with the other, in relation to alterity, which is perhaps the only path to the construction of processes of human development and creativity committed to an ethical, inclusive, democratic and dignified human agenda.

Creating Is a Dialogical Process

Understanding creative processes as situated, contextualized and perspectivized is to perceive them in a plural world, sociolinguistically varied, culturally differentiated, which demands dialogue between individuals so that signs, representations and meanings can be shared and, perhaps, transformed into something new. It seems obvious that dialogism is the constitutive dynamics of creation, as well as of the subject-other-culture co-constitution. In psychology, when extracting, dislocating and appropriating the Bakhtinian concept of dialogue, we must adopt caution and care, in order not to reduce this conceptual borrowing, which has been practiced so much today, since Bakhtin’s work has permeated the social and human sciences.

Dialogue, dialogism, dialogical are central notions in Bakhtin’s work (which will be further explored later in this text), which originate from his “prime philosophy” (Faraco, 2017). Dialogue is conceived as a fact of life, an ideal to be pursued, as a “highly interesting sociological document, that is, as a space where one can more directly observe the dynamics of the interaction process of social voices” (Faraco, 2017, p. 61). Culturally-based psychologies, by appropriating the concept of dialogue,

consider the “multi-layered definitions” of this concept elaborated by Bakhtin, but focus on its sense and meaning within the scope of cultural and sociolinguistic exchanges shared by individuals in interaction and alterity (Glăveanu, 2017; Ness & Dysthe, 2020). Saying that creative processes are dialogical is in line with the sociogenetic conception of the human being, which establishes that it is in the Self-Other encounter, interaction and dialogue (culture) that individuals constitute themselves as humans. Dialogism is not only a constituent part of creative processes, since it can also be understood as a type of dynamics of these processes. The fact of looking at the dialogue, the construction of narratives and the subject’s speech in the world represent rich methodological paths for psychological research, especially for investigations of social creativity. Bakhtin’s work bequeaths conceptions of Being, of the world, of language, and of social interaction that reach psychology as immense possibilities for the understanding and investigation of psychological phenomena, with emphasis on creativity.

Regarding the Bakhtinian Dialogism

A proposal for the integration of theories and concepts demands clarity and organization of thought as an ethical and responsive act in the face of this type of intellectual challenge of the dialogical approach to creativity. Once we have explored the territory of investigation of creative processes, in the field of scientific psychology, it is time to talk about some fundamentals of dialogism, considering its roots in Bakhtin’s work and his Circle.

With a life marked by deprivation, violence, ostracism, exile, among other severe dramas, Bakhtin did not produce an organized, didactic or even chained system of thought in a timeline. His intellectual production has unfinished aspects, heterogeneous marks and complexities that prevent understanding of his ideas and a lot of material that seems to inhabit a becoming that has not materialized (Fiorin, 2020). As every work is in some way autobiographical, Bakhtin’s life has tinted his intellectual output, showing how difficult it was for him to create while experiencing tragedies, hindrances, and rejections.

Mikhail Bakhtin, literary theorist and philosopher of language, was born in Russia, in the city of Oryol, in the year 1895. Son of an important family, but with few financial resources, from an early age, he dealt with tragedies, such as a bone infection diagnosed in his childhood and that, in adult life, cost him a leg (Glăveanu, 2019). His studies made him migrate to different cities, always in search of professional engagement as a teacher, until he reached Nevel (Russia), where the group known as the Bakhtin's Circle was formed. At this moment, his intellectual production began, which found the conditions for the initial organization of his work in powerful interlocutors of the Circle. Important works emerged during this period, which was soon completed for extreme reasons: his health, which demanded special care and financial resources he did not have, and his imprisonment, followed by exile, for reasons that were not very explicit. (Faraco, 2017). After World War II, Bakhtin sees his doctoral thesis rejected by the Gorki Institute, with his title denied. From this moment on, he struggles to gain space in prestigious academic circles, but with little success. He dies in 1975, after a long illness (Fiorin, 2020). His work is only known in the Western world after the 60s.

Bakhtin and the Circle had two major intellectual projects: (1) the Bakhtinian “Prime Philosophy”, which corresponds to the architecture of the act, presented in his work “*Toward a philosophy of the act*” (Bakhtin, 1993), published in 1919, and (2) the Circle members’ project on “A Theory of Manifestations of Superstructure”, based on Marxist ideas that understood Superstructure as “constituted in the social, political and spiritual dimension of life and its products, where language assumes a central role in this constitution (Fiorin, 2020, p. 20). Since the beginning of his work, Bakhtin already brought relevant issues that would be discussed throughout his life as a thinker. Among these themes, the following stand out: (a) uniqueness and the eventicity of Being; (b) the alterity relationships, where the Other is the foundation of the Self, and (c) the axiological dimension of Being in the world, in communication, in dialogue.

In his theoretical structure, Bakhtin recognized a duality between two distinct and incommunicable worlds: the *world of theory*, where life is not experienced but theorized, producing culture and objectification of human acts and the *world of life*, the historicized experience of man,

where unique beings live and produce unique and unrepeatable acts, in a world of uniqueness and unique eventivity. These two worlds are incommunicable, as the first generalizes human acts in search of theories, moving them away from their singularities, and the second is only understandable by its uniqueness, by the eventic (Faraco, 2017). By perceiving itself as unique in existence, Bakhtinian Being also perceives itself occupying a place in the world of life, a place that cannot be occupied by any other person, which impels it to position itself, to respond to life through responsive and ethical acts. The Bakhtinian proposition, “we have no alibi for existence” (Faraco, 2017, p. 21) makes clear the assumption that the individual aware of his/her uniqueness understands that he/she needs to act on everything that is not self, in relation to the other. The alterity dynamics emerges with potency, as a concrete opposition that constitutes the individual, where the Self-Other interactions permeate Bakhtin’s ideas, marking his linguistic interactionism with important psychological aspects, such as the genesis and constitution of the human. It is the dialogical relationship that will make possible the Self-Other interactions. The alterity processes are only constituted in language, in communication, in dialogue.

Bakhtin’s work understands the creative act as a co-author dynamics and, simultaneously, woven by an individual marked by an inescapable uniqueness. In this perspective, the singularity acting in the actional and transforming field of reality only exists in the tense relationship with everything that is Other, therefore non-self. For Bakhtin, even self-observation in front of the mirror can never be thought of as a solitary experience. Otherness acts in the exercise of self-contemplation as an absolute aesthetic necessity (Bakhtin, 2011). This metaphor signalizes the founding dimension of alterity. The other would be the only dimension capable of unifying an “Self” that is not even identical with itself over time. “It would always be through the eyes of the world that the image of “itself”, internally experienced as discontinuous, non-unitary and of non-chronological temporality, can be recognized” (Pinheiro & Leitão, 2010, p. 90).

In his philosophical trajectory, originating from literary criticism, Bakhtin focused on the understanding of the creative act, in order to respond to ontological and epistemological impasses inherent in the

recognition of the challenges of authorship, i.e., of becoming a Being whose nature would always be dependent on the another, i.e., whose condition is that of constitutive alienation to the voice, to the speech, of the Other. On the other hand, as is known, in the world of arts, the new and estheticizing singularity/uniqueness of the existence is a fundamental artistic trait, and also a condition of the artist's creative power. For this reason, Bakhtin, as a literary critic, dedicated his writing to the uniqueness of enunciations, the language that comes to life in the arena of voices from the most diverse social otherness.

For this reason, the Bakhtinian purpose would be to reflect on the inescapable uniqueness of the world of life, as an inexorable force of the eventfulness of existence. As mentioned above, the theoretical act, dichotomized by objectivist rationality, should be united as a real action of the Being's life—in a relationship of moral and responsible necessity (Bakhtin, 1993). Accordingly, the theoretical reason would not be incommunicable with the world of life, but one of its moments, thus restoring the unity among science, art and life, not in a fusional grammar, but in responsive and responsible, i.e., dialogical.

For the philosopher, the aestheticization of life, i.e., its creative and transformative dynamics, would belong to the act of seeing the Being. Accordingly, vision would be a metaphor for thinking about the sensitive and unique refraction of the way in which singularity produces meanings for the world of life and its experiences. Nonetheless, the allegory of vision also teaches us about the never-totalizing partiality of what is seen, a trait of human incompleteness. The act of viewing cannot see everything, since it is limited by the corporeal, spatiotemporal position of the one who contemplates in his perspective/imaginative turn of the otherness with which he relates. However, it is important to consider what the philosopher warns us about empathy: "Pure empathy would, in fact, be a fall from the act-action into its own product, and this, of course, is impossible" (2011, p. 56). With these words, Bakhtin highlights the impossibility of the transposition/annulment of the law of the location of Being. It would be impossible for the individual to have a look that moves from a unique and concrete position in the world (in the real and concrete moment of seeing)—in a fanciful search for extramundane/superhuman neutrality, like the vision of a god. Empathy, as the act of putting oneself

in the place of the other, would be a mistaken illusion, pure empathy would be the very death of the place of the alterity of the other, as irreducible difference, and of the very space-temporal and embodied position of the self.

Precisely because of the impossibility of transposing the law of the location of Being, the absolute aesthetic necessity of the other is the foundation of authorship and creativity. Otherness is the possibility of expanding perspectives on the object of experience. Only the otherness in its irreducible difference to the self is able to climb the field of vision and access the author's blind spots. Even from the point of view of a subjective internality, the internalized otherness is never unison, as it is positioned in a game of tension that is potentially productive to the creative dynamic. Accordingly, we can argue that all creative perspectivization implies a form of axiological summoning of the other in that it expands, broadens and complexifies the aesthetic object.

In *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* (2011), Bakhtin discusses the contemplation of the author's own life in the creative process of an autobiographical writing. In this process, the indissoluble uniqueness through which it is possible to experience and create the world and its alterities is the starting point for understanding the function of the transgression of the excess of vision.

(...) the background, the world behind the character's back was neither elaborated nor clearly perceived by the author-contemplator, and is supposedly given, in an uncertain way, from within the character itself, just as the background is given to ourselves of our lives. (Bakhtin, 2011, p. 17)

The aforementioned "background of our lives", which is beyond or behind the contemplator, is always imagined perspectively in the uniqueness of the act of vision. This activity is situated as a movement of exotopic search, i.e., a projecting itself on the gaze of an imagined otherness, virtualized by the psyche, an alterity that tries to anticipate. This anticipation would seek to access the transgressing face of the author's conscience angle of vision, his blind spot, and the world at his back, i.e., his foreign territory, unknown to himself and thus relevant and invested in the creative function.

In a Bakhtinian approach, the creative process would always keep the look of the uniqueness of the author and his ways of negotiating meanings with the otherness that participate in the activity of creative perspectivization, production of surpluses, on the aesthetic object. In this process, the creative act does not detach from the actor's responsibility for what he/she builds and sees, as even the comprehensive act is also a responsible (and not just responsive) act. The non-alibi is the subject-contemplator's duty in relation to him/her, to understand it in relation to the uniqueness of my Being-event, always seeking to restore the responsible unity among science, art and life. It is important to highlight that Bakhtin also developed a philosophy of language, considering it the symbolic materiality of the presence and inscription of the other in us, constitutive of Being and its becoming. The voice of the other is a founding component of dialogical subjectivity, and this voice is an enunciative and discursive production, produced along the most diverse socio-historical contingencies and existential trajectories of the self.

Bakhtin's well-known notion of polyphony emerges as Bakhtin's praise of Dostoyevsky's work for recognizing in the author's writing the expressive greatness of a style supported by the maintenance of the coexistence of a multiplicity of social, historical, familiar and voices, intuited by creative consciousness. These voices interact with the same strength/power (equipollence), giving life to each other through the tension and conflict they contract among themselves in sustaining their differences. The polyphonic novel (Bakhtin, 1999) would then be like a universe that brings together—in a permanent state of tension and democratic utopia—independent and insurmountable consciences in an endless dialogue. Thus, subjectivity would be constituted by this game of forces of the voices that make up the arena of cult-related voices of the actor, in a game of centrifugal (of concentration) and centripetal (of dispersion) forces. The authorship and the creative process would be a particular way of exploring the heterogeneity of voices in the Self-other-world relationship, in other words, a border construction erected through the novelty that springs from the heteroglottic and polyphonic tension of the cultural universe.

Based on the argued assumptions of dialogism, the understanding of the place of perspectivization (Glăveanu, 2015), as an imaginative

activity inherent to the creative act, gains a new accent. Accordingly, we modelled, in Bakhtin's vocabulary, four fundamental premises of the creative process as a field of emergence of novelty as proposed by Glăveanu in "*Creativity as a sociocultural act*" (2015):

Depending on the context, a multitude of perspectives can be adopted in relation to the same objectivity/reality (objects, people, events, etc.)— (Glăveanu, 2015, p. 170)

Every action is the effect of the subject's inexorable responsiveness to his/her context. The mediating meanings of action emerge in the uniqueness of the individual's impact by the alterity of the world external to him/her. Thus, any objective data/concrete materiality of the experience only exists in relation to the subject, and may assume a plurality of meanings contingent on the uniqueness of the author's consciousness.

Perspectives originate in interaction, constituted in different positions in the material and social world (Glăveanu, 2015 p. 171)

As an effect of the law of location, it can be assumed that perspectives are the effect of the subject's position in the symbolically constituted world. Accordingly, from the physical place to the social role, it would only be in the game of differential Self-other relationships, operated by contrasts, oppositions and antonyms, that actions are integrated into a system of interactional patterns, through which the subject moves in the process of perspectivization.

Elaborating and taking on new perspectives involves adopting other positions in relation to a given situation (Glăveanu, 2015, p. 171)

In the exercise of transgression of vision, the decentering of the here and now, first-person plane, to become a kind of contemplative audience of the action itself (Self-for-the-others), produces resignifications proper to the imaginative perspectivization, inherent to the creative process. This exotopy allows not only an approximation to the senses of imagined alterity, but also its integration and/or return to the original perspective,

producing, in a reflexive way, two or more perspectivising orientations of action.

Moving between perspectives makes the difference between productive positions for creative action (Glăveanu, 2015 p. 172)

Perspectivization is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the production of the new creative process. More than moving/projecting through the perspectives of action, it is necessary to coordinate and/or integrate them in a dialectical and transforming dynamism of the initial perspectives.

Thus, the current book intends to lead the reader through the plurality of views on dialogical approaches to creativity in Psychology. Dialogical epistemology is a guide that will reveal, in each chapter, different nuances and ways of understanding creativity in the singular transitivity of its most diverse production contexts.

Final Considerations

The chapter sought to develop an understanding of the epistemic turn implied in a recognition of the dialogicity involved in the psychology of creative processes. Through the arguments presented, we hope that the understanding of the dialogical epistemology of creativity makes explicit not only the interpretive power of the Bakhtinian perspective in the psychology of creativity, but also its markedly ethical dimension.

Dialogism democratizes creativity by analysing and understanding it in its historical, material, symbolic and intersubjective conditions, thus differentiating itself from clippings that attribute its genesis strictly to the individual or, in the opposite sense, purely contextualist, excluding the subjective and authorial action of the process. If, for Bakhtin, all authorship is co-authoring, is responsive to the most diverse social voices, we hope that this chapter will produce in the reader resonances that expand a creativity that is also a mark of trusted solidarity (Rorty, 2007), collaboration and co-construction. This creativity would be produced by

sustaining the differences in the relationship with others and a creative living that always seeks unity and responsibility among science, art and life.

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3

Dialogical Intersubjectivity in Creative Processes: A Theoretical Reflection

Marina Assis Pinheiro and Livia Mathias Simão

Introduction: Creativity Is Intersubjective

Creativity is commonly understood as the ability to produce—with a certain degree of authorship—original, and innovative ideas and artifacts that have an identifiable impact on the sociocultural world. For this reason, in the common sense of creativity, it can be understood as a kind of praise or qualification of human actions and their results. Regardless of readings among researchers and non-specialists from the most diverse areas, this kind of acknowledgement leaves clues about a still little explored aspect, which is the centrality of the other as a remarkable dimension of creativity. In the context of that theorization in Psychology,

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creativity is conceived more as a trait of the individual than as a developmental and alteritarian process typical of the semiotic, affective and dialogical dynamism of the relationships between individual and culture (Alencar et al., 2010; Kuo, 2011; Wechsler, 1995).

Despite its relevance to various spheres of cultural life and psychological science itself, creativity is a notion that lacks conceptual field of effective interpretive impact on theories about the psyche (Pinheiro & Simão, 2020). The dynamics of creativity is very pervasive to the universes of science, art and life and, simultaneously, bearer of a multidetermined and challenging complexity in relation to the work of scientific generalization in Psychology.

In this chapter, creativity is understood as a process inherent to the intersubjective field of action produced in the self-other relationship. In this process, different horizons of signification of experience (Gadamer, 1989) and its objects of investment are negotiated, in a semiotic, affective and embodied dynamic. Thus, the subject transforms the limits of reality, fictionalizing it imaginatively, through meanings that are peculiar, unique and, at the same time, co-authored by the cultural otherness, by the voices and discourses that take part in his/her subjectivity. Accordingly, the subject constitutes a subjective world that recreates and potentiates the current and concrete objectivity of his/her activities in the world in which he/she participates. In such recreation, it is opened a field of possibilities which can collaborate to the processes of semiotic-cultural transformation of particular dimensions of that world.

According to Glaveanu (2015), it is interesting to note that creativity paradigms—innatism, individualism; or even, in the opposite direction, interactionist contextualism—are perspectives that situate and compartmentalize (whether in genetics, individual history or situation) the genesis of creativity in a non-holistic way. This chapter diverges from readings of creativity as an innate potentiality whose development depends on the environment, placing the other as an inhibiting or fostering aspect of creativity (Glaveanu, 2009; Mitjás Martínez, 2004; Muniz & Mitjás Martínez, 2015; Neves-Pereira & Branco, 2015). We understand creative processes in a holistic and dialogical interpretative key where the transformative dynamism of the self-other-world relationships is not reduced to questions such as oneness (Bakhtin, 1999) and incompleteness, or even

the eventicity of being-with-the-others-in-the-world marked by the irreversibility of time, although we also consider them present in this process.

The study of creative processes requires conceptual-interpretative construction about their fundamental dynamics in the self-other relationship, which, in its psychological face, is markedly intersubjective. The intersubjectivity at stake in cultural emergence potentiates and constructs the various individual and collective realities. Such realities are produced from the necessarily fictionalizing experience of what is lived, since they are perspectivised and mobilized intersubjectively, by the force/tension before the nebulous multiplicity of the possible outcomes in the course of action. Transformative action emerges in responsiveness to the field of non-self, that is, to the plural otherness of both the social and the psychic arena. The field of the possible seems to emerge from the ambiguity in the intersubjective relationships that promote mutually modifying actions of subjects and forms of life. Thus, this article intends to establish a contribution to the research of creative processes through a reflection on the emergence of the new in the relationship among self-other-world (Simão, 2007, 2010), with special attention to the dimension of rupture and addressing of novelty in the relationship between individual and culture.

Hence, we seek to advance in relation to more traditional and mainstream readings of creativity. It is constructed by insisting on the disruptive and ambiguous, affective-singularizing and, simultaneously, everyday-cultural face of the possible perspectives and its novelty during human action in relation to the other (Pinheiro & Simão, 2020). The otherness assumes truly diverse nuances in the theoretical systems of Psychology. Accordingly, many times, the function of the other, as mentioned before, is restricted to the characterization of a facilitating or hindering element/factor of the context in which creativity would take place or even as a context producing recognition, valuation and expertise.

This chapter seeks to shed light on the understanding of the role of otherness in the intersubjective processes inherent to the dialogic nature of creative processes, problematizing this notion at the levels of: a) epistemological foundations of otherness, b) conceptual axes necessary to interpret creativity in the living world and c) empirical indicators, through a very brief illustration from the confinement diaries written by a

participant in social isolation with her son during the first wave of the new coronavirus in Brazil (Pinheiro & Mélo, 2020).

As theoretical-interpretative operators, as described in item *b* above, this text focuses on three axes of intersubjectivity that anchor the self-other relationship in the emergence of the new, namely: (1) Corporeality and perspective: sensitivity as the basis of world perspectivation, (2) The dynamics of the sign in the self-other-world relationship, and (3) Trust as an opening to the other. Finally, in order to give life to the elaborated discussion, we will resort to fragments of the confinement diaries designed by Ingra, a participant in the research of Pinheiro and Melo (2020) who brings, through narrative processes addressed to the researchers via online, her ways of coping and meaning of the pandemic in its first phase. The unprecedentedness of the situation causes a de-centralisation in the participant that engenders intersubjectively generated meanings, producing new ways of being in the world amidst the intensity of not-knowing of the pandemic. In this way, we intend to lay the foundations for the understanding that

it is in the intersubjective sphere that we could situate creativity as a dialogical field marked by its reflective, embodied and affective dimensions, irreducible to an alleged and illusory 'sharing of meanings', as if the creative act was merely a meeting point of social relations. (Pinheiro & Simão, 2020, p. 9)

Otherness and Intersubjectivity: A Starting Point

In this chapter we will take the perspective of dialogical epistemology and ethics, in which otherness is recognized in its radicality, that is, "*the assumption that human nature and human life are constituted in interrelations with 'the other', that is, in other-orientation*" (Linell, 2009, p. 13). Therefore, the other is present at the root of the processes that enable the emergence of the new in the self-other-world relationships typical of the personal cultures (of the historical singularity of the person) and collective (shared and inherited). From this perspective, the subjective process

of human development takes place through the actively transforming bidirectionality between individual and culture (Simão, 2016; Valsiner, 1998). Accordingly, this reflection also seeks to discuss how the symbolic mediation of the other transforms and concretely updates the opportunities of signification always unique and culturally formed in human communicative interactions. This implies taking the other as a heterogeneous field of non-self, from which the person may come to tension, extend and modify the meanings in a permanent process of change of oneself, of the other and of the objects of experience.

The edges of the self-other system differentiate and simultaneously unite self and otherness in a co-genetic relationship (Herbst, 1995) and, at the same time, a relationship of irreducible polarities (Simão, 2010, 2016). Thus, the cultural emergence of novelty requires that we reflect it as a process of change brought about in this tense, ambiguous (uniting and differentiating) and borderline field of the self-otherness relationship, constantly constructed and reconstructed in the search for the self by apprehending what it is alteritarian. (Pinheiro & Simão, 2020, p. 6)

Along this path, we can affirm, initially, that the creative processes imply the emergence of transforming signs of the self-other-world triad. It is emphasized, thus, that its dimensions of change are not always so directly identifiable and will not necessarily happen in the social field and in the immediacy of the here-and-now. It is conceived that the dynamic of the creative processes takes place in the intimate daily life of the forms of life, and may even be directed to the singular, unusual and unique dimensions of those who experience it (as in the case of practices which include self-reflection and even self-enquiry, such as the writing of diaries, psychotherapeutic and therapeutic practices, etc.). The signs are, thus, produced in the differentiating, cogenetic and constitutive borders between the self/person and the field of the non-self, i.e., of the other.

The otherness, whether interpersonal and/or intrapsychic, historical and/or contingent, present and/or virtual, brings the question of *alter* in intersubjectivity as a central notion to think about the dialogical conditions through which creative processes and their transforming signs are developed. The role of *alter* in intersubjectivity, while implying an

openness to otherness, a “faith that the other is engaged in understanding us” (Rommetveit, 1976), this other will also be the one who does not cease to question the meanings of the subject, in an experience that is one of complementarity and decentralisation, of affective, pre-reflective, infra-linguistic attunement and, simultaneously, of rupture and creative differentiation. It would only be in the light of the tensions implied by the notion of intersubjectivity, briefly mentioned here, that a psychology of creativity may potentiate its investigative acuity.

Bakhtinian Foundations for the Epistemology of Intersubjectivity

As mentioned in the introduction, intersubjectivity is conceived as a fundamental premise for the study of creative processes from a dialogical perspective. Nevertheless, as stated by Simão (2010):

In psychology, constructivism, in two diverse contemporary strands, is among the fields of research that have most densely focused on human phenomena that are grounded in intersubjective relationships. This does not mean, however, that intersubjectivity as a phenomenon in itself has always been sufficiently studied. Human intersubjectivity seems to be one of those cases of phenomena so tacitly given as existing and relevant, so fundamental and pervasive in our existence that it ends up in a kind of ‘limbo’ between metatheory and theory. (p. 88)

That said, intersubjectivity reveals itself as a dimension as proper as nebulous in the study of creative processes, demanding effort of conceptual delimitation and, therefore, necessarily, epistemological. The prefix *inter* can generate the impression of a coincidence of meanings, of a meeting/intersection point between fields of social significations, as if the meanings could be the same as those shared among subjects, as if devoid of their opacity and ambiguity. As an example of this possible intuition about the intersubjective, in literary enjoyment, it is common for us to feel mirrored in the text that is read, as if the author knew how to say better what we lack in words to say, as if the author’s writing were a probe

into the psyche of his/her audience returning meanings that produce effects of surprise and recognition, enchantment, etc.

However, in Bakhtinian dialogical epistemology, the assumption of the “communality” of meanings between self and other is transformed into an ethic of responsibility for the meanings refracted by the self in the arena of cultural voices. The responsibility for the signification/refraction of the utterances is based on the function of openness to alterity as the irreducible difference between the self and the other, as well as of the subject to itself in the eventicity of existence. Bakhtinian dialogism is a philosophy born out of literary criticism, taking as its project the enquiry into how the conditions of authorship, human creation and its destinies in the living world. It is worth remembering that if, on the one hand, Bakhtinian dialogism is a reference that grounds the field of dialogical psychology, on the other hand, Bakhtin (2007) was a fierce critic of psychological and psychoanalytical subjectivism, making any very quick approach of his philosophy (from a phenomenological and historical-materialist perspective) to the notion of subjectivity a very delicate, or even risky, work. Accordingly, it becomes necessary to think under which premises of dialogic episteme we recognise possibilities of studies in their theoretical articulation with the intersubjectivity implied in creative processes.

Thus, in the light of Bakhtinian dialogism—which refuted any form of interpretative atomisation/mechanicism of the processes of human creation—it would only be in a work of restoration of the complex unity of action, in the dialogical concreteness of forms of life, that any incursion into the singularity of creative processes would be legitimized. It is guided by this philosophical horizon that [Bakhtin] we take up here in terms of his intersubjective epistemological matrices. For Bakhtin, we are never alone in front of the mirror. The other would participate in the activity of self-contemplation in terms of an “absolute aesthetic need” (Bakhtin, 2003). The other, therefore, is cogenetic in relation to the self, in a relationship marked by opposition and tension in which one polarity only exists in relation to the other. The polarity between the self and the other, within the framework of their differences that may generate tension and opposition between them is, however, also constitutive and constructive

of their respective *selves*, as we will explain below; hence, the perspective of the co-genesis of the self and the other emerges.

In this sense, to participate in the living life, in the cultural arena, implies the inevitable responsiveness and responsibility towards others, a proactive participation of the Being in the world, being with the others. The Being, who is constituted between the unique locus of its vital responsiveness and the environment (natural and cultural) of which it is part, thus authoring, through the sensibility through which it apprehends the other, its creative action.

Being the other a non-self, there would be the impossibility of neutralizing the oneness of the historical, social and even physical position of each self-other polarity. For this reason, meanings would always be particular refractions of the historical social voices that cross the cultural arena and its discursive heterogeneity. To be crossed by such historical dialogic chains does not mean that the significations are homogeneous, but always and permanently interpreted, negotiated, questioned, in an infinite coming and going between the self and the non-self.

Bakhtin emphasizes the impossibility of the transposition/annulment of the law of the localization of Being. This means that it would be in the order of the radical impossibility of the gaze to detach itself from the unique position that the contemplator assumes in the world (in the real and concrete instant of seeing)—in a fanciful search for an extra-worldly/super-human neutrality—that the product of the act of vision would take place. More than this, pure empathy as an act of putting oneself in the place of the other, of suppressing the non-alibi of the being, of its responsibility as to how it responds to the world, is placed as of the order of an impossible. Such impossibility marks the face of abyss and tension between the self and the otherness.

In this sense, it becomes interesting to note that the term subjectivity, and consequently intersubjectivity, are not directly alluded to in Bakhtinian work. Very differently from that, historical-dialectical materialism participated as a lens producing a grammar of radical refusal to an objectivity devoid of the social dimension. This perspective also rejected the idea of an individualising subjectivity that dissociates the subject from the chorus of cultural voices in which it actively participates, constituting the field of consciousness and culture.

In the gap of the most flattened tiles between intersubjectivity and the Bakhtinian construct, the notion of *exotopy* seems to throw important clues. For Bakhtin, the so-called *background of our life*, what lies behind our backs, is supposed, imagined, or even created, from the oneness of the author's act of vision; in an exercise of pretended *exotopy*. A displacement operated in the subject's position, to which he projects himself over the gaze of an imaginary other, i.e., an indeterminate otherness, but that would lend itself to apprehend the transredient dimension of the angle of vision of the author's consciousness. Seeking to become another in relation to oneself, one tries to peek into the blind spots, the unknown; the projective refraction of what escapes us and, for this very reason, is endowed with the most intense value. Existential stylistics, or even the aestheticisation of life, would be strongly marked by the movement of unattainable capture of what overcomes us, exceeds us through the gaze of a stranger who inhabits us. For Clark and Holquist (2004), "self, an activity I can never complete. Accordingly, the self has to be thought of as a project" (p. 97).

Intersubjectivity would thus come close to both the absolute aesthetic need of the other and the inevitability of the surplus, of transgression marked by the incompleteness of the self and the interminability of dialogue. Dialogic intersubjectivity would be born from the assumption of the premise of alterity as the mark of the impossible coincidence of meanings, the denial of complete empathy, that which refers to coincidence, as well as the language games of sameness.

Bakhtin in Dialogue: Contributions of Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology to the Dialogical Foundations of Intersubjectivity

Recognising the centrality of the questions typical of the self-other relationships in the creative processes, before we advance in the articulation of Bakhtinian assumptions with another philosophical key, it is worthwhile to resume the three interpretative axes of the dialogical psychology of the creative processes that we propose here, namely: a) the sensitive corporeality of

the being in the world, b) the semiotic edges of the self-other relationship, and c) the affective dynamics of bet and trust necessary for the intersubjective field of the self-other relationship to be established in the bascule movement between communication and strangeness.

In this sense, from Bakhtinian thought, we can identify that the dynamics of creative processes pervades the notion of an otherness that simultaneously constitutes the *self*, but also causes work in the elaboration of the decentralising and alteritarian surplus of vision. We may add that these processes are not thought of as purely mental and disembodied properties. On the contrary, it would be the sensitive corporeality which puts the *self* in situation with the other and with the world in a pluriperspective way. In this line of understanding, the meaning process is not only conscious, but also intuited and elaborated corporally in the intersubjective dance with the other and the world.

Bakhtin, in *Aesthetics of Verbal Creation* (2003, p. 43), states: “It is the distinction between exterior and interior body—the other’s body and my body—in the closed and concrete context of the life of a singular man, for whom the relationship “Self-other” is absolutely irreversible and given once and for all”. In this passage, the abyss between the self and the other is demarcated, in a game of differences even between sensitive interiority and visible externality of the body. The self-image is never coincident with the other, being a blind spot and demanding its composition by the otherness plane. Bakhtin states that it is impossible for the egoist to love and have tenderness for himself/herself since he/she is unaware of such feelings [love] that implies a self-transcendent addressee. The opening of this body to otherness happens because of its difference, as the need to capture some unity of the self through the eyes of others. The eventicity of the self works on the trail of its dispersion by the force of contingencies, of the fleeting becoming of the here-and-now. The image projected by the gaze of the other emerges as a unifying aesthetic potentiality, a saying for the self of that which escapes it.

If, in Bakhtin, we find the critique of empathy and the embodied abyss between the self and the other, for Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1999, 2012), seeing and touching are only possible through the place of difference, i.e., the non-coincidence and the singularity in the relationship of the self with the otherness. The gap and the irreducible difference of the *selves* would be

precisely the dynamize of the sensitive reversibility with the corporeality of the other in which the hand that touches feel touched. In order to summon an expansion of corporeality in the dialogical register of intersubjectivity, we highlight the Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology (1999, 2012), who develops a philosophy in which corporeality is the foundation. In his works, we find the proposition of a questioning corporeality of the Cartesian objectifying split between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*. Thus, the author makes a counterpoint to this tradition by proposing an active and agentic corporeality, sedimenting the experience of the subject in the world and challenging the transparency and uniformity desired by consciousness.

The body itself, the actual, living body, is ambiguous and tensions usual schemes through an operative intentionality, sensitive and independent of the reflective will. In one of his best-known passages in *The visible and the invisible* (2012, p. 132), we read: "*Instead of rivaling with the thickness of the world, that of my body is, on the contrary, the only means I possess to reach the core of things, making myself the world and making them flesh*". In the ambiguity of this conception, the body is thought of in its double face: as a thing among other things, as the fabric of the world implied in the notion of flesh, and that of a sentient body, thus highlighting "*the abyss that separates the body In Itself and the body For Itself*" (p. 133). In this sense:

The seer does not have absolute power before the visible, but he is also involved by it, invited to play a role of passivity before that which is shown, which is inscribed in the visible fabric of the world. Reversibility, therefore, is that same ambiguity we saw in the body itself, but this time extended to the flesh of the world, so that things are supported by a movement of precession: "precession of what is over what is seen and made to be seen, of what is seen and made to be seen over what is."¹ (Santos, 2017, p. 77)

In this context, the reversibility implied in this understanding gives us a transitivity of the body itself to the body of the other, forming a

¹Original quote: "O vidente não tem um poder absoluto diante do visível, mas é por ele também envolvido, convidado a cumprir um papel de passividade diante disso que se mostra, que se inscreve no tecido visível do mundo. A reversibilidade, portanto, é aquela mesma ambiguidade que vimos no corpo próprio, porém, desta vez, alargada para a carne do mundo, de modo que as coisas se encontram amparadas por um movimento de precessão: "precessão do que é sobre o que se vê e faz ver, do que se vê e faz ver sobre o que é" (Santos, 2017, p. 77).

reversible unity/continuity between what touches and is touched, as well as its suspension as when the seer feels seen by what he/she sees (like feeling looked at by the mirror image). His philosophy seems to indicate a dialectical movement that is devoid of syntheses and that, for this very reason, comes close to the dialogical grammar that is sustained by the tension between the self and the other as relationships of opposition, tension and abyss. Consequently, if unity emerges, it emerges in this landscape as an aesthetic creative unity that implies an ethics of responsibility about the effects of being-with-the-others.

If, on the one hand, dialogism necessarily implies the recognition of the face of permanent disagreement, of the non-coincidence of the self-other, the alterity also emerges as the impossible to be assimilated, causing, on the psychic level, suffering and work of elaboration. In the excess caused in the disagreements with the otherness, the difference that arises from the permanent opening to the other is the *pathic* and *embodied* field of potential transformation.

In his philosophy of very psychological-experiential outlines, Merleau-Ponty dives into the filigree of this sensitive and phenomenological corporeality, whose discursive purposes were distinct from those found in Bakhtinian writing. More than that, Merleau-Ponty brings an agentive body in the intersubjective processes, a dialogical and creative intercorporeality of what is lived, thus generating its own perspectives on the world, and even conflicting with the field of consciousness. Merleau-Ponty, in a relation of surpassing Bakhtinian grammar, presents us, in a broadened way, one of the most challenging territories in the study of creative intersubjectivity: the corporeality, not only as a vehicle, but as an agent in the process of creation of the world.

Trust, Corporeality and Signification: Intersubjectivity in the Psychic Dynamics of Creativity

In Psychology, intersubjectivity brings us closer to the enigmatic question: How can our meanings be simultaneously singular/subjectively created and objectively/socially shared? (Cornejo, 2004, 2008). It is

recognised, as a starting point, that the intersubjective phenomenon is marked by the movement of transcendence of the private world of speakers (Rommetveit, 1976). As proposed, the intersubjective dynamics of the self-other relationship invites us to think about its conditions of possibility in the living world.

It is understood that if the communicative dimension assumes a certain prominent face in intersubjectivity, on the other hand, to think of it only through its strictly linguistic face is to remove the holistic and human vectors of the experience of being-with-the-others. Human communicative exchanges are produced at the boundary between self and non-self, in a relationship of co-dependence and co-genesis. They are not only a given social-pragmatic contingency, but they are constituted by affective layers, corporally producers of perspectives and signically constructed.

The “living world” of intersubjectivity implies the work of recognizing it in the labyrinthine territory of uncertainties, ambiguities, contradictory and conflicting social codes. In this sense, the study of creative processes, in its dialogical orientation, is assumed as necessarily sustained by the intersubjectivity that anticipates the responses of the otherness, but which, however, limits intersubjectivity understood as full/totalizing sharing of meanings. The emergence of the new in creative processes is situated in intersubjective states that imply certain conditions for its construction. As an open system with restricted indetermination (Valsiner, 2001), creativity research is also the study of the construction of intersubjectivity, where self and otherness turn the abyss of differences into a territory for the production of new metaphors that widen forms of recognition in culture, or even expand the very concept of ourselves in new forms of solidarity (Rorty, 1989).

Rommetveit states: “*Intersubjectivity has thus in some sense to be taken for granted in order to be achieved*” (1976, p. 204). As a kind of necessary illusion about the shared communality of the social world—in this “mutual faith” (*ibid.*) that the other is able to understand me (Simão, 2010)—the dynamics between reciprocity and strangeness inherent in intersubjectivity takes place. It is for this reason that intersubjectivity is a state, a relational construction that can be undone, diluted. The opening and closing to the otherness that is exterior and/or interior to the self

requires the reading of the intersubjective experience as necessarily transitory, fleeting, and, for this very reason, forged in an intuitive dance that always anticipates the responsiveness of the other, at the same time as it feels interpellated by it.

The intersubjective state is drawn both in the situated here-and-now of the communicative act, as well as in the historical and singular temporality of each actor. The eventicity of the intersubjective event is also constructed as a kind of response to the syntaxes of habit and the instituted social grammars. Conceiving, thus, creativity as a dialogical dynamic of the self-other relationship, we consider important to highlight which would be the constitutive dimensions of this self-other edge. These proposed dimensions do not exhaust the intersubjective whole, as they will also be briefly discussed in this chapter. It is as a starting point for a research agenda on intersubjectivity in creative processes that they are proposed.

Corporeality and Perspective: Sensitivity as the Basis of Perspectivation of the World

Perspectivation is an activity inherent to the intersubjective state of action. It is the mark of the oneness's position of the *self* in relation to the meanings it produces in the interpretation of the world that it perceives as independent of itself. This world may include the most diverse otherness of its social reality. In this process, the construction of anticipatory perspectives of the diverse otherness implied in the actional becoming is one of the central axes of the creative dynamics (Glaveanu, 2009). In this sense, the perspective would not be something that the subject or the world "possesses", in the sense of an attribute. On the contrary, perspective is relational, dialogical and eventually generates tension. The *self* is constituted in an infinite exercise of differentiation, coordination and integration between the self and the non-self (other), configuring a *self* and a world which would be, as mentioned before, multiperspective. The perspective implies the unique position of the *self* from which it perceives

and acts the otherness of the world, the position that always implies the partiality of what is seen and the precession of what it sees as a dimension that recreates the actor itself.

There will always be a disjunction between mine and your perception and understanding of the world, between a symbol and the object or class of objects it designates, between my memory of the past, experience of the present and anticipation of the future (...). What defines creative action is not only realising the difference between my position and your position, for instance, but the capacity to move between these orientations and integrate or coordinate them in the creation of a new understanding or a new object that is significant for its maker and/or her 'audience. (Glaveanu, 2015, p. 169)

In this sense, it is common to think of perspective within very reflective contours, focused on the dimension of consciousness in its ways of establishing differentiations, of perceiving the field of the non-self, as well as the objects of experience. Nevertheless, perspective is produced from a unique position of the *self* from its position in the space-time relationship to the perceptual and sensitive corporeality that produces the reality of what is perspectivalised. Accordingly, intersubjectivity is provoked in this relationship of opening an embodied-sensible way to an otherness that is equally active and, to a certain degree, dislodging from the *self*.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology can broaden the understanding of the perspectivalising corporeality of the world in its even pre-reflective face. His *Phenomenology of Perception* (1999) is centered on the lived and concrete experience of the encounter of the sensitive body with the world. Coelho Jr. and Carmo (1991) resume an analysis of the philosopher's work on painting, which discussed it as an activity like that of a writer. Nevertheless, the painter's one would be even more challenging to understand because it would hold the tacit world of colors, as well as unusual and singular lines, with a quality difficult to be shared. Unlike a naive objectivism distinct from the artist's subjectivity, the painting would be the style that the author puts on

canvas, and “the artist’s style is like his own body, it is not an instrument or a simple vehicle, but his way of inhabiting and assuming the world, his way of presenting himself to others, his existence.”²

Thus, the vision alluded to here would not be confused with a meta-physical visocentrism of the spirit, but a philosophy of a vision based on a corporeal eye that opens itself to the world and this world that, reversibly, sees it. In his reflection, to see is to touch at a distance, presupposing the difference and a certain hiatus between the seer and what is seen, but, at the same time, implying in being possessed by what is seen, as the notion of flesh as the fabric of the world may allude to. It is emphasised that it is not proposed, with this, a body outside cultivation in the social-historical world. This corporeality would also be formed by the habit and its practical schemes capable of suspending or even violating the spontaneity of the person with his/her body in the world (Pinheiro & Mélo, 2020). The experience of the person with his/her body in the world would be an agent and producer of linguistic and extra-linguistic meanings, some of them with the potential power to disarticulate familiar symbolic webs, following the example of the sublime in the arts. The tension between the corporeality of habit and the disquieting dimension of the present body are faces present in intersubjective states. In the words of the author: “precisely because it can close itself to the world, my body is also that which opens me to the world and puts me in a situation in it.” (Merleau-Ponty, 1999, p. 229).

Seen in these terms, thinking about the intersubjective sphere through which perspectives are produced, it would be interesting to think as if we were between the habit and the actuality of feeling, between a corporeality that closes and that opens up to the most diverse others, perspectivising is also a sensitive and affective apprehension, embodied about the world that opens new possibilities for mutual understanding between the self and the other.

²Original quote: “o estilo do artista é como seu próprio corpo, não é um instrumento ou um simples veículo, mas sua maneira de habitar e de assumir o mundo, sua maneira de se apresentar aos outros, sua existência”

The Dynamics of Meaning in the Self-Other-World Relationship

The notion of intersubjectivity calls for reflection on how it would be possible to share meanings about the social world when the self is not even identical to itself over time. The alterity as a mark of the unassimilable in the relationship with the non-self, brings us closer to the affective and embodied registers that can transform more stable significations in personal and collective culture as a creative process.

The signification undertakes two vectors: a) those referring to the ways of being impacted by the otherness of the world, that is, a way of being touched by the complex chaoticity of experiences and, consequently, b) the efforts of organization, of placing order, facing the disconcerting and amorphous noise of the experience, or, at another level, the polyphony of the arena of social voices. In this sense, in the more or less porous frontiers of sign emergence between the *self* and the field of *non-self*, the production of signs and their effects of signification cover dimensions that go from the components of intuitive, sensitive and embodied abstraction to communicable symbolic abstraction.

While representation, the signs always report to an object that exceeds it in its substitutive capacity, as well as produce effects of signification that, in some degree, extrapolate and recreate the represented object (Innis, 2020). In a certain sense, the signs are thus marked both by the partiality of what they seek to represent and also because they are accompanied in the human experience by a certain feeling of opacity in the ability to say, always keeping a portion of a half said (or badly said).

Accordingly, in the context of human communicative exchanges, the ambiguity breaks the illusion of language transparency, of meaning as something that could be 'shared' intersubjectively, as some psychological jargon may say. The intensity of ambiguity in language experiencing point to meaning uncertainty, but specially, to the infinite field of possible. Thus, the ambiguity experienced in the meaning-making processes leads to a place where the subject does not sovereignly dominate what is said, shedding light on an affective semiose full of ambivalence, a non-linear dynamic of feelings (Pinheiro, 2020).

Ambiguity at the boundary between the self and the other is the source of both the disquieting (Simão, 2003, 2016, 2020) mismatches with otherness, and it would also act as creative potentiality, as a divergent and, therefore, necessary perspective in relation to other majorities. In the search for balance and harmony in the intersubjective dynamics, the dialogue involved in the search for the reduction of ambiguity would potentially generate novelty both in the intra and intersubjective levels, which is typical of the creative dynamics. In this sense, it is valid to follow Rundell's (1998) proposition that creativity has its dynamics marked by the non-deterministic face of the relationships between the self and the alterity of the past or the present, but rather as a force of rupture/opening that cannot be reduced to its dialogical conditioning factors, but is open and ambiguous in its intersubjective emergence.

Affectivity and Trust in Creative Intersubjectivity

The affective apprehension of experience is what establishes the possibility of mutual understanding in the intersubjective field (Boesch, 1991; Guimarães, 2020; Rommetveit, 1976; Valsiner, 2001). In this sense, from the most intuitive and embodied abstractions of the encounter of the subject with the world, affectivity goes back to the pathic dimension typical of distress, i.e., the passivity of the rapture. *Affectum* or *affectus*, even in the Latin roots of the word affection, we not only find meanings linked to the suspension of the subject's condition, but also to the activity of that which produces impression, which connects, makes operate and is fixed in the subject's experience. Thus, the intersubjective states are constructed based on an affective and infra-linguistic register, which produces the possibilities of construction of harmony and dialogic openness to the other, from a history that is singularly inscribed through the affectivity of the experience.

An interesting Winnicottian contribution (Winnicott, 1971) is the relationships between trust and creativity in the intersubjective field of human development. Far from addressing the extension of this

psychoanalytic theory, it is still necessary to point out that Winnicott seems to have bluntly elaborated the fundamental role of trust for spontaneity, for playfulness and for the production of all the creative formations of culture and creative living.

In his developmental theory of the *self*, the sense of trust is thought of as an affective and experiential record of the relationships between the individual and the environment, where the primary relationships with significant otherness would have a certain protagonism in the way the *self* relates to the instabilities, uncertainties and vulnerabilities of its life context with other *selves*. Winnicott (1971) understands that the potential space would be the qualitative-experiential field of interface between the phantasmatic subjectivity of the self and the alterity of the environment and its otherness. In this space, the child's play—the transicionality of objects singularly produced as a protective extension of the first bonds—would coat the disturbing roughness of the world's otherness with a new and peculiar quality. In this sense, the potential space launches clues about an experience that is relived differentially throughout all life, which is the possibility of creative fruition of everything that engenders the abyss and the separation from the other. Such fruition becomes possible from the sense of confidence in the possibility of not being totally devastated/eclipsed by dependency and, consequently, by the lack of the other. On the other hand, the sense of trust also points to a path very different from the manic route where the omnipotent self would lose, through indifferenciation, its capacity to build on the border with the world. As empty spaces experienced together with the alterity of the world and its diverse otherness, the potential space would dynamise creativity and its possibilities when invested as a welcoming, enquiring, curious and stimulating emptiness, differently from the affections of dependency and the horror of helplessness.

In this continuum between individual and culture, the understanding that trust produces a subjective field between the individual and the environment, very distinct from the one produced by fear, paranoia, social stereotyping and suspicion provoked by social control. If intersubjectivity implies a trusting bet on mutual understanding and engagement (Rommetveit, 1976; Simão, 2010), this form of affective-dialogical openness becomes unfeasible under the affection of distrust.

In a brief possible dialogical record for this chapter, we propose trust as a relational category, matrix of spontaneity and creative processes. Through trusting relationships, calculation is replaced by risk management and the acceptance of uncertainty. The bets with the otherness are thus translated into a dialogue where the asymmetries of the positions in the social fabric assume a potential for excess and construction.

In the trail left by the authors, trust signals the experiential quality of the creative dynamics and the very possibility of production of intersubjective states in the relationship with the other. In this process, the signical ambiguities of the symbolic field in the relationship with the other may harbour the genesis of potential fields of action regulated by the desire for experimentation, by constructive authoring, by the sense of self-realisation, transforming the phantasmic and mythical plot of personal and collective cultures (Boesch, 1991).

Undoubtedly, this is perhaps the part that most requires elaboration and its articulation with corporeality addressed earlier, in a theoretical-epistemological challenge between psychoanalysis and the cultural-dialogical perspective. Nonetheless, it is in the incompleteness of this formulation that this writing launches itself from the effort of building interlocution and possibilities of development in its dialogical and intersubjective register.

For the Sake of an Illustration: The Confinement Diaries of the Ingra Case

As a brief illustrative exercise on the intersubjective dynamics working in creative processes, we will resort to two brief fragments of confinement diaries written by a research participant, during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil. In this research (Pinheiro & Mélo, 2020), the participants were invited to send, every two days, audio or written messages by *WhatsApp*, to the researchers, sharing their usual activities, thoughts and feelings that went through their daily lives transformed by social isolation.

Ingra (fictitious name), a forty-two-year-old lawyer, married and mother of a six-year-old child, recurrently reports her strangeness about the invisible threat represented by the virus and the helplessness in apprehending a paradoxical reality of risk. The hypercoexistence with her son, the meal table that had also become her work table, along with the domestic demands, provoked in the participant the feeling not only of exhaustion, but of loss of *self*, loss of “my own time” that happened between the commuting home, work and school.

Her reports were sent in audio voice format, and thus, the research activity gradually became a pleasurable experience, a subjective gap that is articulated to the time subtracted by the confinement: “I like to make these statements and it’s funny that I, in these little hours, I think of that song by Marisa Monte: ‘Today I told the walls things from my heart’. I sing badly, right?”. Thus, the song appears as a musical sign that seems to indicate the effects, on the edges, between herself, the researcher otherness and an Ingra of a pre-pandemic world. The metaphor of the walls seems to reconstruct signally, the quality of dialogues with those who are capable of a silent and trusted listening, the walls do not comment on what she speaks, nor can they tell what she speaks to anyone. As a trusted interaction—which can now find trust in the researcher, just like the walls in the music—the audio-recorded talks were full of intimate-affective intensities. She felt describing better through speech than through writing, in a more free and spontaneous drawing than in the calculation and testimony of writing. In the uncertainty about the experienced situation, the information too frightening, Ingra reports a way she would have found to reassure herself. In her words:

Every day I look at the football field there and I get that apprehension that if one day they start to make a field hospital, everything becomes too desperate. Then my, my desperation balance is to look at the field and see that there is only one field there, that there is no field hospital yet. So, today I took the photo just to be able to be part of our statement and I think ‘it’s pretty fine, it’s only one field. (Pinheiro & Mélo, 2020, research data)

In this sense, it is interesting to think about how the image of the football field, which was always within sight of her residence, becomes a sign

that “balances despair”, or even a tensional dialogue between hope and despair for the future. Between seeing “only a field” and its potential amazement, imaginatively anticipated in a field hospital, there emerges a sign full of tension of perspectives on the otherness of the world that oscillates between the familiar and the unknown, the visible and the invisible threatening. The sign of the empty field, produced, is intuitive and sensitive abstraction of the world, encompassing both the desperate apprehension about the vulnerability of the bodies of people in the world and, reversibly, the reassurance of the presence of the scene that is fictionalised before the unknown. In this sense, the football field is another, because recreated in the intersubjectivity with a world that imposes the security-risk relationship.

In the intersubjective and embodied perspective through which she constructs her solutions to the indeterminism of what she experiences, we find the report of the corporal event of her son, which seems to give new meaning to her daily life in times of hypercoexistence with the child:

The tooth of Lírio (fictitious name) fell out. So, it's funny, life goes on, life is not stopped because we are in quarantine in isolation. So, his tooth fell out, then it is his third tooth that fell out. He took it out himself. You see how funny these things are. Like, there are things you have to do, that's normal life. I think it was in Jurassic Park, something like that: life finds a way to take its course. It's a bit of an exaggeration, a bit nerdy, but that's what it is. Life keeps on going. (Pinheiro & Mélo, 2020, research data)

Accompanying the transformations of the son's corporeality emerges as an encouraging surprise that recovers a certain strength of life when faced with the risk of death and, simultaneously, with the threat of the loss of the everydayness of life (the tooth that falls out, the tooth that is born, in the temporality of daily life). It is interesting to note that in the filmic narrative that emerges in its utterance, the dinosaurs of Jurassic Park perhaps re-enact the drama of a species that was also transient and composed of extraordinary beings, which also followed its cycle of life and death. “Life keeps on going”, and so she concludes. In this context, the corporeality of the child appears as a re-centralising otherness of a threatened futurity, as well as in the intersubjective ambiguity of this sign, the tooth

extracted by the child itself, the feeling of being seen back, of also recognising oneself with a certain autonomy and movement even if in the dark contours of the pandemic in question.

The solutions produced by Ingra are, therefore, creative processes that became possible to elaborate in the intersubjectivity produced by the research situation and by the demand to search for intersubjectivity in her daily relationships with her others that are now transformed by the isolation situation. In the intimacy of making her apprehensions be said, apprehensions intuited by bodily sensitivity about the otherness of the world, the creative action is also a way of fictionalising other perspectives, of widening forms of recognising herself and the strangeness of what is lived. In this process, new ways of intersubjectivity can be re-established, which will demand the creation of other perspectives for a *self* and a *world* that do not stop being reconstructed.

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4

Creativity as Resistance for Survival: The Anticolonial Indigenous Rap Group “Oz Guarani”

Kleber Ferreira Nigro and Danilo Silva Guimarães

For the Mbyá-Guarani, words are confused with the origin of the universe. Each Mbyá is an obscure and anonymous artist of the word, a wild poet, a prophet of his time, a singer of primitive avant-garde.

His word is his own being, his spirit, his soul, his essence.
(Douglas Diegues)

Intro

This chapter aims to expose some of the initial reflections and findings achieved through wider research that has been conducted by Nigro under the supervision of Guimarães during the last two years. In order to follow this book proposal, we intend to present and discuss the creative process that has emerged from our current study empirical approach—the opportunity to assist the formation and the first steps of an indigenous RAP

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group consisting of three young inhabitants of a Guarani-Mbyá village located at the outskirts of São Paulo, one of the most unequal, chaotic and urbanized cities in the world.

The ongoing study is an unfolding of a previous research (Nigro, 2016; Nigro & Guimarães, 2016) dialogically articulated (Marková, 2017) among Psychology, the arts and indigenous knowledge that was also carried out by the authors of this text and resulted in the dissertation “Other Cannibals. Jaguarized Theater Against the Colonization of Thought” (Nigro, 2016). As the title might suggest, one of the main contributions offered by this preceding exploration was to present some unusual notions about cannibalism, understood not only as the savagery, ferocity or misbehaviour originally attributed to indigenous peoples but also as the savagery, ferocity and misbehaviour that identifies colonizers, capitalists or consumers (Jauregui, 2005) and their societies around the world.

In this sense we fetch from the preliminary study the opportunity to develop and deepen the notion of **Cannibal Alterities**, defined as

the combination of pervasive forces that remain active as a cultural system of identity hijacking, imposition of thoughts, control over bodies, affects and actions, ontological regulation and neutralization, constitution of submissive mentalities, spiritual domestication and subjectivities shaping, perpetuated through countless physical and symbolic control devices, such as military, professional, advertising, educational, scientific, religious, legal, governmental and many other structures interested in a general uniformity of actions and thoughts, in order to make perennial in people fake notions about themselves and their social realities, as well as a consequent blind acceptance of the long-term barbarism that affect them. (Nigro, 2016, p. 99)

These ideas were formulated during the scrutiny of the broad *Jaguar Cibernético* theatrical project, also known as “Cannibal Tetralogy”: four intertwined plays based on Amerindian knowledge brought into dialogue with Western conceptions, a masterpiece written by the Amazonian expert and playwright Francisco Carlos. The set of phenomena described

above occurs iterantly in every Latin America country, where the exploitation and plundering perpetrated by capitalism and colonialism has caused long-term destructive impacts, generating deep social inequalities, precariousness and suffering, thereby hampering the complete and free exercise of people's corporeities, thoughts and feelings. We argue that the development of the Cannibal Alterities notion into a concept can provide an important tool to the scope of Psychology, allowing us to identify, lighten and neutralize the harmful processes depicted and thus indicate paths for life experiences with greater dignity and freedom.

To move towards this direction, we chose as our current case approach the artistic production of the indigenous RAP group Oz Guarani, a small repertoire of anticolonial songs focused on the 520-years conflict between the Guarani and the non-indigenous invaders of their lands, in which lyrics are also manifested their distinguished millennial culture (themes like cosmology, world views, spirituality, ways of living and relating to the environment are addressed). We intend to apply the Cannibal Alterities blooming concept to highlight and better comprehend the phenomena depicted and fought through their artistic activism, thus triggering general reflections beyond this unique experience that can be extended to countless situations and bring understandings about creative processes.

Circumstances and Objective

During 2014 and 2015 the first author of this text volunteered, under the supervision of the second author, with the Amerindian Support Network¹ (ASN), a service provided by the Institute of Psychology of the University of São Paulo through which teachers and students periodically visit indigenous villages willing to listen to their inhabitants' issues and seek the dialogical construction of possible cooperation paths. One of the demands

¹The constitution process of the Amerindian Support Network and its operational assumptions at the Indigenous Psychology field are directly described on: Lima et al., 2019; Bertholdo & Guimarães, 2018; Achatz & Guimarães, 2018; Achatz et al., 2016.

presented concerned two young boys who wanted to start a RAP group and did not know exactly how to do it. Due to the artistic experience of the first author of this chapter, he was called to organize the ideas they had and consolidate the Oz Guaraní group. Under our assistance, a collective method was constructed and allowed the group to create their first songs and perform them at live concerts. The objective of this text is to present and discuss the creative process that emerged during this interethnic dialogical experience.

Theoretical Background

One of our research focal points is knowledge constructed by young Guaraní-Mbyá singers who address interethnic conflicts as the main theme of their lyrics, taking a critical stance in face of the colonizing practices of non-indigenous peoples who, for more than 500 years, have been threatening and eliminating their existence through constant genocides, ethnocides and forced displacements. Accordingly, we could find in the theoretical horizon of Indigenous Psychology, “a field of knowledge that emerges in a tensional border between the science of psychology, historically exported to the colonized portions of the world, and the knowledge produced in indigenous contexts” (Guimarães, 2020, p. 13), adequate conceptual resources for the accomplishment of our study, since it keeps a critical point of view regarding common postures of Psychology, frequently “linked with conquests and missionary efforts—rather than with liberation efforts—of the ‘Others’” (Valsiner, 2017, p. 27). Classical Psychology is generally based on Eurocentric theoretical-methodological traditions that might be adequate to the WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic) societies (cf. Groot et al., 2018), but not far-reaching enough to provide adequate tools for the comprehension of human beings immersed in complex social and historical conditions like those living at the communities where the ASN usually collaborate with. Due to the many difficulties faced during our initial interethnic experiences and avoiding the application of alien schemata,

Guimarães considered the peculiar situations faced by Amerindian peoples and created a specific framework at the vanguard of the defensive edge against colonialism.

It converges with an ethical horizon, committed to the attention and care to the communities. It also relates with historically threatened and silenced sociocultural perspectives. Listening carefully to the indigenous ideas concerning the relation with the colonizers is, then, relevant to the construction of an indigenous psychology. (Guimarães, 2020, p. 13)

Beyond the ethical dimension, epistemological and ontological concerns were also formulated in order to provide researchers and psychologists adequate tools to manage the countless disquieting experiences (Simão, 2016) that emerged from multiple sides during the interethnic dialogues established through the ASN collaborations.

Coherently, we do not adopt classical Psychology notions of creativity, frequently based on Western paradigms (Celik & Lubart, 2016), mostly constituted by individualistic, essentialist, cartesian, elitist, androcentric and monocultural models (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015), also monological (Matusov & Marjanovic-Shane, 2016), influenced by consumerism and commodification of human activity (Sierra & Fallon, 2016) and implying a radical rupture with the old (Celik & Lubart, 2016). We share, then, Glăveanu (2016) point of view, for whom “creativity is, first and foremost, a quality of human action. To create means to act in a flexible, novel, and meaningful way in a given context” (p. 210), and keep our critical stance by adopting creativity dialogical and co-constructive approaches (Matusov & Marjanovic-Shane, 2016) that respect multiple contemporary notions of society, humanity and nature (like Sierra & Fallon, 2016; Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015 or Achinte, 2013), considering collective, inclusive, multiple, local, social, political and pluricultural conceptions and practices (Glăveanu & Sierra, 2015), also maintaining respect for tradition and the old (Celik & Lubart, 2016), so we can build our own non-Western creativity hybrid conceptual paths, much more adequate to the socio-cultural contexts we have been working with.

The methodological trajectory adopted is based on the Dialogical Multiplication (Guimarães, 2020), a theoretical system elaborated on the border of Psychology and Anthropology “that focuses on alterity relationships, showing the diversification of objects referred in the dialogical situation” (Guimarães, 2020, p. 8) and concerns “the multiple possibilities of symbolically elaborating experience, provided by the different cultural fields” (Guimarães, 2020, p. 10), considering the epistemological, ontological and ethical dimensions of the subjects and cultures that establish dialogue. Through a dialogical interpretive analysis, we intend to outline the most important tensions for the comprehension of the phenomena under investigation. In this sense, we constructed triadic dialogical analysis according to Marková (2006), for whom “a dialogically based theory of knowledge requires Alter-Ego and the object of knowledge to be the starting point of the inquiry” (p. 207). We have, therefore, as a starting point in our dialogical approach, the Authors-Artwork-Audience triad: the authors are the members of the Oz Guarani group, the artwork is their musical repertoire, and the audience correspond to the people who had contact with these songs. This step is necessary in order to understand the social effects caused by the insertion of the symbolic objects (RAP songs) into the cultural field (Boesch, 1991). In a next stage, ascending and descending trajectories of dialogical analysis are being performed according to Guimarães (2016), looking at the relationships between the parts and the whole. The descendant path determines the general context of the phenomena depicted and narrows to the particular situations. The ascendant path was fulfilled according to the notion of Heterogeneous Voices proposed by Wertsch (1991) which, based on Bakhtin, indicates as direction the analysis of the referential of semantic content and the expressive character of each of the verses of each song under scrutiny.

Jaraguá Indigenous Land Context

In this world we live in,
There is a lot of prejudice
Brother kills brother for money

Image of natives shown as animal
 Forced displacement ordered by evil
 My people have suffered too much
 We are the soldiers who fight for peace
 Save Jaragua!

Oz Guarani

We Are All from the Same Nation [lyric excerpt]

The Jaraguá² Indigenous Land is the smallest indigenous territory in Brazil, located at the northwest side of the city of São Paulo, consisting of a few villages where about one thousand Guarani-Mbyá inhabitants are living surrounded by more than 12 million non-indigenous citizens. Its area was occupied for millenia by indigenous peoples until the sixteenth century, when they were evicted, enslaved or killed in conflicts against European explorers who sought to loot the wealth and minerals of their lands, especially gold. The Guarani-Mbyá people reoccupied that space in the second half of the twentieth century, living now in a small piece of land strangled between a highway and chaotic urbanization. Although it is located in one of the richest cities in the world, their living conditions are precarious, lacking basic sanitation, adequate housing, natural resources, leisure options, cultural facilities and decent health care. In addition, they receive constant legal threats of expropriation of their lands, preventing the community from fully developing their culture and enjoying a serene dwelling. Even so, they maintain their Guarani language as the main language, as well as their religiosity is prioritized: there are three houses of prayer (*Opy*) in the territory, where they can develop their spirituality, their shamanism and sing their sacred chants daily.

It is, therefore, a distinctive situation among the outskirts of São Paulo: although that place carries several problems in common with any other poor area of the city, the Guarani-Mbyá culture differentiates them and allows the exercise of unique ways of being and understanding the world to its young people, expanding their horizons of thought and action. Diegues (2006) explains that

²Jaraguá is the name of the neighborhood where the indigenous land is located and also the name of the mountain (the highest point in the city) at whose foot the Guarani-Mbyá villages are settled.

The art of the word, or musical, or ritual, of the Mbyá-Guarani [...] happens outside the limits of art and is confused with life itself and with a religion proper to the word. There is no distinction between art and life, praying and singing, dancing and praying and singing in the Mbyá world, just as there is no distinction between word and soul. (p. 33)

Such a peculiar configuration in which life, art and ritual are not distinguished with clear limits has always been very evident during our interaction with the Mbyá from Jaraguá, where we noticed a continuum between prayer, ritual, dance and music: everyone naturally takes part in such interconnected events, especially in the prayer houses. This natural and vital affinity with these multiple dimensions of everyday life also provided a quick rapport with the universe of RAP, which has its own characteristics among the indigenous because of their cultural particularities, above all due to the seminal importance that the word has in both Guarani-Mbyá and Hip-Hop cultures.

In addition, the Guarani-Mbyá face the same problems that affect all the indigenous peoples in Brazil and Latin America, such as racism, social invisibility, marginalization, ethnocide and genocide, among many others. In this regard, a unique cultural and socio-historical context was generated, uniting the peculiarities of the Guarani-Mbyá culture and the common problems with poor populations and with other indigenous peoples, enabling the birth of a new type of cultural-artistic expression through which young Mbyá can act meaningfully in order to fight the many problems that oppress their people.

(Indigenous) Rap

Through this beat
 I talk about my life
 I'm talking about the lives of
 young people from the outskirts
 Past stories make me bleed
 Another child died at dawn

Oz Guarani

Pemomba Eme [lyric excerpt]

RAP³ is a musical genre created in the Bronx, New York (USA), in the early 1970s (Chang, 2005), developed by Afro-American, Latino and Caribbean populations, which later spread throughout the world reaching unrestricted audiences. As the most expressive manifestation of the Hip-Hop culture, RAP advanced indistinctly around the world (especially among the lower social classes) because of its method of artistic creation: most of the time, the musical beats are built through samples of records, which does not require the presence of traditional musical instruments or musicians, and the lyrics are poetically spoken over the beats in a straight and raw way, sometimes improvised. When the artists mix musical samples from different sources (like music, noises, television, movies, animals, nature, streets, etc.) something new will always emerge, which will then be elaborated until it becomes a unique piece of art: the greater the creativity, the richest the new RAP song will be.

In Brazil, RAP flourished in the early 1980s as an essentially street culture, linked to afro-descendants and poor populations, becoming a weapon against the invisibility or the silencing of the marginalized people and offering the ghettos a powerful tool for expression and transformation. RAP developed with greater intensity and professionalism during the 1990s and was widespread in the 2000s, when “more and more minorities such as women, indigenous and homosexuals are finding space for expression as rappers, inserting new demands on the agenda and proposing new aesthetic elaborations” (Teperman, 2015, pp. 10–11).

Over the past decade, many indigenous artists have been expressing themselves through RAP all over Latin America. As examples, we can mention the group *Wechekeche ni Trawün* and the singer *Luanko Soler* (Mapuches from Chile), the groups *Linaje Originarios* and *Embera Warra* (Emberas from Colombia), the rapper *Liberato Kani* (Quechua from Peru), the *Wayna RAP* group and the *Ukamau y Ke* duo (Aymaras from Bolivia), the *Los Nin* group (Kichwa from Ecuador) and the singer *Mare Advertencia Lirika* (Zapotec from Oaxaca, Mexico). In Brazil, the

³ Nowadays, RAP stands for Rhythm And Poetry.

pioneers of indigenous RAP were the Brô MC's, members of the Guarani-Kaiowá people living in Mato Grosso do Sul state, who have been developing their music since 2008 and today reach audiences around the world.⁴ If RAP has been increasingly studied by the humanities along the decades, indigenous RAP, on the other hand, has been scarcely approached by science. We can say that it is a new school in RAP Music, endowed with unique characteristics that are not present in any other style. It comes close to “conscious RAP”, since the artists aim to awaken in their audience a higher social conscience, seeking to transform those who are affected by their art: “RAP presents itself as a music that is not only in the world but intends to transform it” (Teperman, 2015, p. 98). In this regard, transformation implies the emergence of novelties.

While RAP originally performed by the afro-descendant populations seeks to re-elaborate their identities, indigenous rappers aim to affirm and reinforce their identities and cultures. Furthermore, their songs commonly develop themes like long-term memories and cultural traditions, genocide and ethnocide, the fight against racism and disrespect, the struggle for land and for well living, criticism against capitalism inequalities and social lack of visibility. Oftenly, their lyrics are sung in multiple languages (indigenous and non-indigenous) and traditional music samples are inserted into their beats.

Birth of the Oz Guarani Group

In 1500, bro, the invasion happened
 Until today they are throwing bombs over my brothers
 In defense of indigenous rights
 Oz Guarani arrived
 Resistance!

Oz Guarani

Pemomba Eme [lyric excerpt]

⁴Oz Guarani, Brô MC's and Kunumi MC, another young Guarani-Mbyá rapper from São Paulo, composed together the song “Resistência Nativa” (Native Resistance), recorded and released in 2021.

When, in 2014, Nigro was called to coordinate the Oz Guarani group structuring, he knew that it was a complex challenge for several reasons, like the difficulties that arise when establishing an interethnic interaction, the peculiar social-geographic context involving their community and his only theoretical (scientific and artistic) contact with indigenous peoples. On the other hand, there was a wide theoretical and psychological support provided by the ASN through guidance, group supervision, reports and readings that backed the practical activities carried out throughout the process.

At first, there was a strangeness feeling affecting both sides in dialogue. Getting in direct touch with a different culture, at the same time far away and so close to ours, is a disquieting and sometimes disturbing experience for most of the ASN collaborators for multiple reasons, like listening to two different languages (Guarani and Portuguese) spoken alternately all the time or realizing that there are many more cultural traits in common than we could figure out previously. We could notice an initial apprehension coming from the young artists while talking to a white student almost twice their age who did not look like a RAP fan, and it took some time for us to get acquainted properly. About the ASN experiences, Guimarães explains that

Our team adopts a feed-forward approach, in which the experience provides the opportunity to develop new conceptual explorations that help us overcome the obstacles that come up in our work. This process depends on the cultivation of trust between psychologists, students, and communities. Then, knowledge is constructed through an unconventional methodology in psychology. It includes being together with people in the indigenous communities without research concerns. (2020, p. 4)

At that time Nigro was not acting as a researcher, but rather trying to help and learn from this rare experience of understanding the cultural particularities of the two young boys who had only two lyrics and a group name. During our first meeting, one of the singers showed us the song called “Conflicts from the past”, promptly playing an instrumental music from his cell phone and started singing: “Conflicts from the past stand in my mind”. This first verse made us sure that the presence of Psychology

teachers and students in the village was not in vain. Impacted, Nigro did not understand most of the other verses, some in Guarani language, but realized that the lyric brought current and secular profound issues, very unusual in the speech of young people.

The next meetings took place in the village Tekoá Pyau, where we talked about music and about the Guarani-Mbyá culture. Nigro tried to explain the basic structure of RAP, showing some Brazilian RAP classic songs and the original samples used to build them. At the third meeting, a third rapper joined the others, forming the trio that remained throughout the time we worked together.

Even though our connection was strengthening at each visit to the village, we couldn't find an isolated and quiet place where we could act creatively and freely, so our work was stagnating. For that reason, we tried moving our workplace to the University of São Paulo, where we could concentrate better and, hypothetically, make progress. Unfortunately, the austere university moods intimidated them and the work did not evolve either. As Nigro has always lived close to the Guarani village, we decided that we should try to organize the meetings at his house. He opted for commensalism as a way for getting closer: the afternoons fuelled by RAP videos, laughs and hot dogs began to have an effect. As we got closer and closer, the differences were decreasing: we noticed our similarities in language, clothes and thoughts, and at each meeting their real yearnings and anxieties were clearer, thus allowing us to build, through verbal and non-verbal dialogical dimensions, a common affective soil (Achatz & Guimarães, 2018) that culminated in the creation of five songs: “*Conflitos do Passado*” (Conflicts from the Past), “*Grito dos Xondaro*” (Scream of the Soldiers, later published as *Guerreiro*, which means Warrior), “*Contra a PEC*” (Against the PEC⁵), “*Tentando Demarcar*” (Trying to Demarcate, unreleased) and another unnamed one. We then created an effective working method: after long collective discussions they composed the lyrics together and, once finalized, we rehearsed them testing some instrumentals until we reached a final format. After achieving this goal, the artists were recorded on video singing the complete music, so they could

⁵PEC stands for Constitution Emendment Project and this song refers to PEC215, a legal project that threatened their land possession.

later watch and listen to their songs and definitively memorize them. It was during this creative process that we reached the highest level of involvement in the group's activities: the transition from the village and university environments to Nigro's home environment also meant the transition from participant observation to observant participation (Bastien, 2007).

During our initial experience at the Guarani village, Nigro's performance was similar to an ethnographer's classic action, who becomes familiarized with the place, with the people and their cultural habits through distant participant observation and few shy interactions. As spending time together generated more proximity between everyone, when the meetings were being held at Nigro's house everyone felt more comfortable to establish a much closer and fraternal relationship: Nigro was no longer the confused ethnographer at the research field, but the artist (simultaneously DJ, rapper, conductor, producer) who sang the songs along with the members of the group, setting the pace, guiding voice overlays, showing classic RAP references, etc. There was, for Nigro, an awareness of how the effects of his active participation altered his research situation. Later on, after these observant participation moments, the young singers named Nigro "*ruvixá*", a Guarani word equivalent to "leader".

Discussion

Conflicts from the past
Stand in my mind
People and more people
Being slaughtered
Trying to protect their lands
They lost their lives and their rights
Where's our respect?
Since more than 500 years
The indigenous are suffering
With disrespect and a lot of prejudice

We struggle for rights.
 When those Portuguese arrived
 They stole our lands
 They killed my relatives
 And here we are, young people aware
 Telling you that things could be different
Oz Guarani
 Conflicts from the Past [lyric excerpt]

Living under the dictates of capitalism and colonialism has not been an easy task for the inhabitants of the global South⁶ countries, especially for the indigenous populations of Latin America, whose millenary cultures have been continuously attacked over the last five centuries. Maldonado-Torres (2021) attests that, under these pervasive domination forces, we're living **catastrophic** times: "lands are taken from people who are not considered people while the dispossessed, murdered, raped, and tortured non-people and everything related to them — their creations, habitats, and even self-perceptions — become the targets of endless wars" (p. viii). The struggle to overcome this situation is also millenary and began when the first European colonizer set foot on the lands known today as America, in 1492. Despite the millions of dead and thousands of extinct cultures, many peoples and cultures have survived and resist colonization and capitalism, maintaining their ancient practices and knowledge and adapting to the chameleon-like forms that domination has taken over these centuries. We believe that these remaining millenary cultures have a lot to teach us, about them and about ourselves (see Guimarães, 2021). In this sense, we adopt theoretical systems that consider the ethical dimension as the driving force of our interethnic dialogical learning relationships. If oppressive control structures metamorphose from time to time, the weapons of resistance are also renewed and are fundamental forces for the survival of the oppressed. Creativity and art are two of the most important weapons for us to remain alive. Western

⁶"The global South is not a geographical concept, even though the great majority of these populations live in countries of the Southern hemisphere. The South is here rather a metaphor of the human suffering caused by capitalism and colonialism at the global level, and a metaphor as well of the resistance to overcome or minimize such suffering." (Santos, 2012, p. 51).

notions of art and creativity can't save us from being displaced, tortured, raped and killed. Our catastrophic times imply that art isn't entertainment, it's survival. Creativity is not a privilege of geniuses and their superior knowledge, it is a struggle for life. The oppressive context in which the Guarani-Mbyá from Jaraguá survive forces them to seek new forms of expression to overcome invisibility and spread their ideas to indigenous peoples of all ethnicities and also to non-indigenous peoples. Creativity and art are means of survival for the members of the Oz Guarani group.

We agree with Vygotsky (1999) when he argues that “art relates to life as wine relates to the grape [...] art takes its material from life, but gives in return something which its material did not contain” (p. 308), and these attributes of transformation and unpredictability are what sustain our anticolonial modes of resistance and survival through art, by dealing with the harsh conditions that life in global South imposes to most of us and transforming them into aesthetically organized objects capable of improving life experiences or even changing fates. We also understand art as a “system of interpreting, re-presenting, understanding, imagining, symbolizing and problematizing the world” (Achinte, 2013, p. 446). By thematizing local peculiar conflicts and anxieties in their RAP songs, the group Oz Guarani awakens in its audience new reflections, feelings, worldviews and means of action to overcome the adversities imposed by structures of domination that act invisibly but remain present and spread throughout the colonized world.

Despite the difficulties involved in any interethnic interaction, the results obtained after the period of cognitive-affective attunement and of environmental conditions adequacy were very prolific and rewarding. We weren't able to create properly until we felt comfortable with the environment and with each other. “The interethnic relation is thus an arena for multiple meaning constructions. Deconstructions, reconstructions and adjustments constitute the cycle of novelty production in culture” (Guimarães, 2020, p. 53). The emergence of novelty took us time, patience and only happened after the collective development of a proper method, respecting everyone's characteristics, which happened through experiencing verbal and non-verbal layers of dialogue.

Creativity in indigenous rapping requires flexibility and willingness to listen to the other. The RAP songs that emerged from this process were

powerful, political and meaningful, achieving indigenous and non-indigenous audiences throughout the world. As a non-indigenous dialogical co-creator, Nigro could learn by accessing unusual perspectives that lead him to achieve new understandings about himself, the others and the world.

The main interethnic tensions addressed on the six Oz Guarani songs⁷ we analysed were about forced territory displacement, prejudice, disrespect, racism, violence, nature, genocide, invisibility and fight for their rights. As an example, “The Indian is Strong” song presents a spoken testimony at the beginning:

A teacher asked me: ‘you are indigenous but why do you live in the middle of the city?’ But it was not our people who invaded the city, the city was invading our lands, reducing our sacred lands, ending our forests, polluting our rivers, what right can a person have to say that we are invaders? Since we have always existed here and we have been in this resistance for 517 years.

The mature explanation brought by the young artist changes the meaning of the “invasion” notion, understood by the teacher as an indigenous practice, however deconstructed when attributed by the rapper to non-indigenous people. There’s a clear rupture being described concerning the different cultural notions about territory occupation. Quijano (2005) explains that “by its nature, the Eurocentric perspective distorts, when it does not block, the perception of our historical-social experience, while at the same time it takes to admit it as true”. This kind of Eurocentric perspective deconstruction happens many times while listening to Oz Guarani songs, bringing many questionings about Western paradigms which generate internal resignifications. While studying the social reverberations caused by their art, we collected comments on their YouTube music videos presenting many reports of disquieting experiences, like “I’m indigenous but I’m white, I’m confused”, or “never listened to your songs before but I’m loving my country’s original language. By the way,

⁷ Songs analysed so far: “*Conflitos do Passado*” (Conflicts from the Past), “*Guerreiro*” (Warrior), “*Contra a PEC*” (Against the PEC), “*Pemomba Emé*”, “*Somos todos da mesma nação*” (We Are All from the Same Nation) and “*O índio é forte*” (The Indian is Strong), all of them published in video by the group on YouTube.

what's my country's original name?" and "your work calls me not to continue my ancestors colonizer legacy". For Simão (2016), disquieting experiences cause tension or disturbance, affecting the person understandability about him/herself and about his/her I-Other-World interactions, driving him/her to act, think and feel differently from what he/she was acting, thinking and feeling until that moment. The first comment shows a confused person trying to understand his own ethnicity (or himself), the second comment is made by someone amazed with his country's original language, trying to figure out his country's original name (thinking/feeling differently), and the third comment shows a person willing to feel, think and act differently, avoiding taking part on destructive colonizing actions.

The Oz Guarani particular case indicates that disquieting experiences caused by art help people unveil and notice the Cannibal Alterities that secretly harm them, like not knowing his own ethnicity (identity hijacking; a fake notion about himself), not knowing his country's original name or language (imposition of thoughts; a fake notion about his socio-historical reality) or acting thoughtlessly repeating his ancestors harmful colonizing practices (blindly accepting the long-term barbarism that affects him; a fake notion about himself and his social reality). These are only three comments out of more than 400 comments about Oz Guarani work that were found on YouTube and other Internet websites, plenty of them bringing resignifications of Western/colonial points of view and outlining Cannibal Alterities. As Achinte (2013) explains, while talking about art made by indigenous people, "the creative act is the pedagogy of existence, in as much and in how much it must untie the knots that the Western narrative attached to each and every one of us" (p. 450). The music of Oz Guarani is powerful because it clearly reflects the catastrophic situation in which a huge part of the world's population lives, untying Western narrative knots all the time. This disastrous condition is clearer to indigenous peoples due to more than five centuries resisting and fighting the same enemies, but it extends to countless other peoples, specially throughout global South countries. Untying knots tied by the colonial/Western/capitalist perspective is the creative act that has kept the Guarani alive and strong for so long (while countless other cultures and peoples were violently wiped out). It's resistance for survival.

Final Considerations

A world in permanent catastrophe has forced the hegemonic powers of the West to rethink their foundations, their methods and the consequences of their actions. Turning their attention to the ways of being and thinking of peoples for so long exploited and marginalized by them might be a way out of the labyrinth in which they have voluntarily lost themselves. Not only indigenous peoples deserve attention, but also *campesinos*, river dwellers, *quilombolas*,⁸ healers and many other social groups that feel the effects of this catastrophe on a daily basis and remain invisible in endless suffering throughout the global South. Even so, countless peoples have survived on this planet for millennia resisting the capitalist and colonialist forces that have oppressed them in recent centuries by strategically fighting for their lives, their cultures and their originary rights.

Art and creativity have peculiar meanings on most of the global South countries, as resistance for survival. Many of us have to be creative so that we don't starve or get murdered by the government. Sometimes art is our only protection against the multiple miseries we have to face every day. Acting collectively is a survival skill indigenous peoples had to learn a long time ago, in opposition to the monological, individualistic and solitary subjectivities that cartesianism spread throughout the West. Creativity notions that discriminate, marginalize and/or silence the other are essentially anti-dialogical and do not apply to our human and socio-cultural research contexts.

Our work through the ASN has shown that, by adopting ethical, ontological and epistemological assumptions, interethnic dialogue has provided all of us multilateral meaningful and enriching experiences and generated valuable personal and scientific learning. To get closer to the members of the Oz Guarani group, it was necessary to build pleasant human and geographical conditions so we could understand the particularities of the Guarani-Mbyá and Hip-Hop cultures, intertwining them in order to spark a collective creative process that gradually became

⁸Descendants of enslaved Africans who live in remaining collective communities throughout Latin America.

powerful enough to consolidate the group locally and globally and generate collective human development.

By opting for a dialogical approach based on ethics and respect for the others, our final goal is to find within the peculiarities of an ancient culture generalizing means to understand how to outline, untie and overcome, individually or collectively, the Cannibal Alterities colonial-capitalist moorings and move towards a free existence, for indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. If one of the main motivations in the life of the Guarani people is the search for the “land without evil”, understood as the place where every man is free (Meliá, 1991), we can say that we share this same ideal, seeking “social liberation from all organized power as inequality, as discrimination, as exploitation, as domination” (Quijano, 2014, p. 70), which will lead us to a complete and dignified human experience.

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5

The Birth of Metaphors in the Northeastern *Repente Music*: A Proposal for Dialogical Analysis in the Study of Creative Processes

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Known as *repente music*, the *viola singing* is a traditional activity in the Brazilian Northeast and has as its main characteristics: being an oral artistic production, made improvisationally, under a set of rules regarding form (metric and rhyme), performed by a pair of singers/*repentistas*. Based on qualitative research, this chapter aims to discuss the subjective and dialogical dimensions of the emergence of the novelty in the poetic dialogue among the singer, his partner and the audience, from the perspective of the first element. As a theoretical anchorage of the creative process, we take the cultural-historical perspective, which privileges the notions of co-creation and distributed creativity (Glăveanu, 2014; Neves-Pereira, 2018; Pinheiro, 2018). The study has as ontological-epistemological reference the Bakhtinian dialogism, based on the notions of axiological position of

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the author-creator and the alteritarian character of the aesthetic experience, understood as a particular form of impact of the subject by the world (Pinheiro, 2018).

We understand that the *viola singing* is a poetic form whose creative resultant corresponds to the singer's performance in the construction of improvised verses, and the metaphors constructed are configured according to the Bakhtinian characterization of enunciation, constituting themselves in the social, historical and cultural concreteness of the self-other relationships. Accordingly, we propose the metaphor as a unit capable of preserving the psychological properties of the creative process in the action of the singer, characterized as a sign marked by: a) intense ambiguity; b) openness to the alterity of what is said; c) synthesis among perspectives proper to the enunciative language game among present, historical and imagined audiences.

In order to carry out the proposition about metaphor in the creative process, the participant, a *repente* singer, was asked to improvise with a habitual partner, with the purpose of getting as close as possible to the spontaneous context in which the creative process occurs. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participant, with emphasis on his trajectory in singing, and on the cognitions and emotions related to the compositional process of the previous stage. Based on a preliminary analysis of the data constructed during the singer's performance and during the interviews, we elaborated a proposal of dialogical-oriented interpretation, considering the following axes implicated in the emergence of the metaphor: (1) Dialogical othernesses; (2) Temporality; (3) Technique and (4) Aesthetics. Throughout the chapter, we will detail how each one of the axes collaborated for the access and modelling of dialogical nature of the here discussed creative process.

Thus, we seek to discuss the dialogical dimensions of the creative process proper to the emergence of poetic metaphor, taking creativity as a process that unfolds in the I-other-world relationship and, therefore, is implicated in the ways of knowing and feeling. In this dynamics, the metaphoric comprises a point of affective-cognitive and cultural synthesis, with the potential to constitute itself in an alteritarian and transforming saying of the poet's experience. The alterity would mark a certain surprising discontinuity of the metaphorical saying for both the

enunciator and the audience. The present chapter proposes, therefore, an exceeding face of metaphors to the actors who experience creative dialogicity. Seen in these terms, this chapter deals with the creative process in its aesthetic-subjective conditions implied in the axes mentioned above, which are assumed as conditions of possibility of the genesis of poetic metaphors in the *viola singing*.

The *Repente Music* as an Object of Study of Creative Processes in Psychology

The study of creative processes in Psychology has been conducted for over 70 years, under distinct theoretical approaches (Neves-Pereira, 2018). During this period, the scientific community has recognized the relevance of this field of research, with historical prevalence of theoretical models focused on the individual attributes of the creative person or the characterization of the product resulting from individual action. One of the contributions of such models has consisted in the development of measurement strategies and correlational studies (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). Nonetheless, in the movement that is proper to science, other approaches have been emphasizing the need to expand the conceptualization of creativity beyond the phenomenon circumscribed to the notions of individual or creative product, proposing understandings erected from a dialogical, materialist and sociocultural ontology (Glăveanu, 2014). In this last perspective, we ask ourselves how the dynamics of the creative process would occur in the experience of the subject whose activity is characterized by improvisation and oral poetics, in this case, the *viola singer*, better known as *repentista*.

The *viola singing* is one of the symbols of popular northeastern Brazilian culture. Its representatives, accompanied by the musical instrument, enchant audiences due to their ability to improvise verses on the most diverse themes, *repente* proposals, and respecting formal poetic elements. In the scientific universe, the *viola singing* has been the object of anthropological (Sautchuk, 2009, 2011), sociological (Mello, 2012) and literary (Silva, 2011) studies. Specifically in the fields of psychology and

linguistics, we find the studies of Roazzi et al. (1991), Roazzi and Carvalho (2001) about *repentistas's* linguistic abilities and their social representations about *repente music*. There is, however, a gap regarding psychological research on the creative processes of these singers.

It is relevant to note that the *repente music* has well-defined formal elements, as it follows strict rules of metric, rhyme and thematic coherence, in the midst of which, the singer is challenged to impress his audience and overcome his opponent, starting from a motto¹ that requires him to coordinate knowledge about diverse topics—politics, religiosity, hinterland's identity (*Sertão*), or even the feelings of his audience. Tavares (2016) explains that the moment of singing is marked by the expectation that the singer manages to fit his ideas into historically inherited metric forms.

The conception of creativity assumed in the present chapter is based on the Bakhtinian dialogical referential, which implies considering that the creative act articulates the responsiveness in the self-other relationship, since such categories are understood as cogenetic (Pinheiro & Leitão, 2010). From this perspective, the author's consciousness is constituted in and through participation in arenas of voices that are interwoven, in permanent tension regard each other in the historical-cultural context. Bringing this premise to theoretical psychology, it is coherent to assume that thinking is never a solitary act, but involves a continuous dialogical exchange (Cornejo, 2012). Taking this philosophical thought as an ontological reference to think the psychology of creative processes, we propose that the singer has his action in the world constituted from his unique position as a voice in the historical link of countless voices, singularizing himself with reference to the othernesses. We understand here the concept of otherness as encompassing everything that is constituted as non-self for the singer, including his own enunciations, in terms of their effects of signification to the other and toward himself. In this self-other interaction, alterity may emerge as an experience of recognition and strangeness in the face of difference, capable of generating new

¹ According to Tavares (2016), the mote corresponds to a number of ready-made lines, provided by another person and which serve as an obligatory reference of theme for the construction of the stanzas, forming their last verses.

meanings (Simão, 2004). Based on this, we propose that the reflection on the creative processes in the activity of the viola singer should consider the game of voices chained in poetic production, which are actualized in the singer's action and in his interaction with his partner and with the audience.

Such understanding converges to the understanding of creativity as a process that implies the subject's particular positions and interactions with others (Glăveanu, 2009, 2014, 2015). When receiving a mote and uttering his singing, the *repentista* resorts to a symbolic chain that encompasses repertoires of previous meanings and anticipation of future responses from the various virtualized othernesses in the enunciative act. This is expressed, for example, in the notoriety of a specific region, *Sertão do Pajeú*, as a cradle of poets and singers, since the proliferation of entire families linked to this kind of poetic singing or other poetic forms contradicts the individualistic paradigm of creative ability. Although it is possible to argue for genetically inherited attributes, in our perspective, we consider that the "transmission" of this practice occurs through the singer's interactions throughout his life, in the family and community context.

This apprehension of subjective interaction is dear to what Neves-Pereira (2018) calls the "sociocultural conceptual position of creativity", a perspective that is considered by the referred author as recent and innovative, while identifying its foundations in the works of renowned authors, such as George Herbert Mead and Lev Vygotsky. In this approach, developed by Vlad Petre Glăveanu (2015), the creative act is conceptualized and investigated in the condition of a sociogenetic phenomenon, engendered in intersubjective relationships and, therefore, distributed in different instances, instead of located in an individual alien to their social relationships and life trajectory.

Glăveanu (2015) proposes that the creative act involves the interaction among actor, audience, action, artifact, and affordance, engaged in the relationship with materiality, sociability and temporality. In the case of the *repente music*, the singer balances two positions: he acts performing his singing, but also becomes audience for the one who challenges him, to the extent that he needs to listen to him to plan his next verses. Moreover, each singer is also audience of himself, valuing and being impacted by his own enunciations. It is important to highlight that,

simultaneously; each member of the duo is for the other partner and adversary. As for what could be considered artifact in the *repente music*, we propose that this would be of a predominantly symbolic nature. Admitting the centrality of the production of the verse in singing, it is possible to consider that the words also figure as an artifact for the singer. In favor of this proposal, we rely on the following argumentation:

It is interesting to note that even when physical objects are not used at a particular stage of a creative act, this does not imply the acultural nature of that stage: our conceptual thinking is grounded in the use of words and notions, and language itself is a classic example of an artefactual product in the history of civilisation. (Glăveanu, 2013, p. 71)

We propose that the singer deals with the linguistic artefact of his performances in the articulation of words in verse and, in the space of what can be done with words, in the dimensions of their phonemes and senses, creative action can take place.

In this perspective, we propose that the articulation of words in the form of metaphors is a central aspect in the psychological investigation of the creative process in singing. According to Cornejo (2011), the conception of metaphor was introduced to the cognitive sciences in a logic of opposition between metaphorical and literal discourse, assuming the evolutionary primacy of the latter in relation to the former in ontogenetic development. Nevertheless, the author argues, this view lacks empirical support, since there is evidence that preschool children express metaphorical language. Furthermore, the view that there are differences between cognitive processing of literal and figurative language is contested. Instead, it is argued that the difference between literal and metaphorical is delimited by the context of emergence of an expression.

We understand, therefore, that the *viola singing* has a face close to the literary aesthetics of poetry, in which the use of words exceeds, with greater intensity and intentionality, the communicative function to evoke in the reader an affective, cognitive and corporal impact. As a differential, the cantoria presents orality, improvisation and the place occupied by the identity of its actors as representatives of the country people.

Viola Singing as a Poetic Dialogue

When discussing the creative process in the *viola singing*, one of the fundamental questions concerns what would be the artifact in the singer's creative action. According to Sautchuk (2009), the *repentista* builds verses according to the rules imposed by the style he proposes to follow, seeking to impress the audience through a poetic dialogue. Having this characterization as a reference for the understanding of the phenomenon under study, we arrive at two aspects that can be taken as a starting point of our theoretical discussion: first, that we are dealing with an artifact devoid of physical materiality, since it is a linguistic artifact—the improvised verse; the second aspect concerns the definition of singing as poetic dialogue. These aspects converge to the understanding that the phenomenon under study needs to be characterized as an activity of poetic creation. Thus, it is necessary to define what we understand as poetic from a cultural and dialogical perspective.

In his investigation on the word “poetry” in Mikhail Bakhtin's works, Ventura da Silva (2014) concluded that the philosopher did not develop a theory of what poetry would be. However, he presented relevant considerations around this word throughout his work. In the understanding of the author of the thesis:

Poetry, for him [Bakhtin], is a textual genre, however, **that differs from other types of text for having this relationship with art**, while the poem is the text that can be considered within the textual genre poetry. And poetic deals with the characteristic of a text or an author, or, to put it another way, it deals with a specific style of writing, which brings to our reflection that what makes poetry for Bakhtin is the poet/artist and not the language. (Ventura Da Silva, 2014, p. 42, emphasis added)

Regarding the highlighted excerpt, Ventura da Silva (2014) explores in the course of his work that the words poetry and poet appear in Bakhtinian writings as a specific textual genre and tied to the notion of art, understood as a human action aimed at the rupture and extrapolation of the artist's limits, a surplus of vision to the author's position produced by the alterity of the poetic dialogue. Moreover, the author analyses that Bakhtin

linked the poetic dimension to the metaphor, when defining that “the allegory is a metaphor that has lost its poetic sap” (Bakhtin, 1979/2010, p. 415 *apud* Ventura Da Silva, 2014, p. 40).

Based on the analysis of the author mentioned above, we reflect that the characterization of the metaphor as an enunciation endowed with “poetic sap” concerns its aesthetic effect as a form of affective, cognitive and corporal impact caused by the intense ambiguity of the sign. To meet this argument, it seems pertinent to bring the discussion developed by Tateo (2017) regarding the relationship between aesthetics and the concept of “poetic logic” elaborated by the philosopher Giambattista Vico. Such concept concerns a sensory and affective way of elaborating meanings about the world and human experience, underpinned by the imaginative function. Metrics and rhyme integrate the field of the rules of cantoria, so that these obligatory elements are expected by the public, according to each style. Therefore, the surprising element in cantoria extrapolates the fact that the singer rhymes improvisationally and expands to the field of meanings that are constructed in the exchange between the singers and the audience, and among themselves, the singers. Nonetheless, before exploring this idea and its implications for the creative process of the viola singer, we will discuss the notion of metaphor in order to delimit the meanings that the term assumes in the present work and what is proposed in relation to the investigation of the creative process from a dialogical perspective.

A Discussion on Metaphor for the Study of the Emergence of the Novelty

Being characterized as a poetic form, the *viola singing* uses metaphor to generate different impacts on the audience. The philosophical tradition has extensive reflections on the metaphor and its implications in the discourse. We will take some of these reflections as instrumental allegories for the challenge of problematizing and situating the metaphor as a unit of analysis of the creative process. The first reflections on metaphor in Western thought have as an exponent the Aristotelian vision, which

established a rigid distinction between metaphorical and literal, defending that the first would be a deviant form of the second and would fit only in the domains of poetic and persuasive language (Sperandino & Assunção, 2011).

Despite the dominance of this perspective (Jamison, 2017), different conceptions have emerged, which have expanded or even radically modified the notion of metaphor. Menezes (2012) uses Vico's concepts of *founded metaphor* and *founding metaphor* to analyze the conceptions regarding the theme. The author argues that Aristotle's thought represents the tradition of *founded metaphor*, by understanding it as a deviant lexical operation that can be used rationally to control language, understood as an artifact useful to the representation of the world. In opposition to this tradition, *founding metaphor* incorporates the notion that all language is metaphorical, so that there is no sense in proposing the existence of a literal language, but rather of crystallized metaphors among speakers, which acquire the *status* of truth.

In view of these distinctions, we consider it interesting to extend our discussion based on Ricoeur's (2000) approach to metaphor, which differentiates between metaphor "sedimented in language" and "live metaphor". According to this thought, the distinction between the authentic metaphor and the usual metaphor lies in the way it is contextualized among the members of a linguistic community.

The notion of live metaphor/dead metaphor implies the idea that, at some point of the circuit, the enunciation is made in an inventive way, the reason why we take this proposition as an allegory of the difference between the metaphor that appears in the ordinariness of life and the one capable of surprising, as it provides an opening for the unprecedented, configuring itself as alterity. Therefore, we position the "live metaphor" as an interesting descriptive category of the metaphor in which the new emerges and which captures the other in its cognitive and affective dimension.

As a result, we understand the metaphorical as intrinsic to the register of language, in line with the reflections made by Cornejo (2011) when questioning the usual notion of metaphor in the field of cognitive sciences. Taking classical rhetoric as a starting point, the author highlights the etymology of the word literal: coming from the Latin *litteralis*, it

refers to what keeps the “meaning of its letters”. Nevertheless, based on the premise that the letters do not keep in themselves an essence capable of telling the meaning of a word, since they do not have their own and unique sense, the idea of literal can be understood as a metaphor. With this, the author does not intend to extirpate the distinction between literal and metaphorical, but to highlight that this distinction is only possible *a posteriori*, not while people use language. In his view, the distinction is not in the way meaning is constituted, which would always be metaphorical to some extent, but in how far the process of expanding meaning is directed to the extreme.

In the field of cognitive science, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) propose that our conceptual system is metaphorical, so that it would be possible to investigate, through metaphor, how thought is structured, the ways of perceiving and behaving. The authors describe a series of metaphorical concepts—identified as structures of thought—contextualized to American culture, such as “argumentation is war”, “love is madness”, “vitality is a substance”. They argue that these metaphors would be conventional to that culture’s way of thinking, materializing in thought, behavior and social relationships. Nonetheless, besides the “conventional metaphors” to the daily ordinariness, the authors categorize the “new metaphors”, defined as those “that are outside our conceptual system, metaphors that are imaginative and creative” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 128).

In this direction, Kharkhurin (2016) presented a brief review on cognitive models for the generation of metaphors, allowing us to glimpse as a common aspect among them the fundamental role of emotion, taken as an element that motivates the formation of metaphors and produces the relationships among the different conceptual domains involved. According to the author, all the generation of metaphors is permeated by the references and affective reconstructions of the individual and, in turn, they raise in the reader/listener a provocation that is also affective, especially when they present a parallelism between ideas of opposite emotional charges. Nevertheless, in his cognitivist research on poetic construction, the author did not develop the issue of the emergence of metaphor beyond these propositions.

In the present chapter, we seek to understand the genesis of metaphor from the synthesis between the affection and the concreteness of the experience from a dialogical perspective. Therefore, we do not approach this process through the notion of an individual interiority, but from the notion that it happens in a chain of voices. In the Bakhtinian perspective, language is understood from two main axes: dialogism and multilingualism. The first is related to the notion that the discourse can only take place in social relationships, which invalidates the idea of individually produced meanings; the second refers to the notions of pluralism and dynamics as constitutive marks of language (Di Fanti, 2003).

In Bakhtin's reflections on language, the concept of enunciation is considered central, since it articulates fundamental premises of dialogism. According to Brait and Melo (2005), Bakhtinian work approaches the enunciation as a unit whose meaning can only exist and be understood in a historical, cultural and social context, in which verbal and non-verbal processes are integrated in the situation of interaction between individuals. In the authors' reading, the enunciation has as characteristics the ambiguity and the opening beyond the intentionality of the enunciator; besides always comporting the addressing to an addressee, be it concrete, presumed or undetermined. We understand that, regardless of the category of the addressee, he is perceived or imagined by the author in a volitive-cognitive dimension that has rebatements in the enunciation process.

Bringing these perspectives to the understanding of metaphor in the *viola singing*, we propose that it is configured as an enunciation and, therefore, can be taken as a unit of dialogical analysis, to the extent that its emergence occurs in the self-other interactions, from the refraction in the relationship between the singer and his audience. At this level, we consider that the language framework proposed in the philosophy of Mikhail Bakhtin also offers support for the articulation between metaphor and the creative act. Thus, the characterization that we develop intends to approach the perspective of the founding metaphor, as a unit of the creative process taken as cultural, intersubjective and dialogical. In this line of thought, we propose an understanding of the metaphor in the creative processes from three characteristics, which will be verified in the empirical study: (1) Sign marked by intense ambiguity; (2) Opening for the alterity of what is said, through the intersubjective effect of

recognition and perplexity that allows the transfiguration of the course of the experience; (3) Synthesis of perspectives proper to the enunciative language game between the audiences present.

In order to elucidate the above hypotheses, firstly, we assume that language has as one of its fundamental marks the ambiguity, which presents itself in greater or lesser degree, but is never absent (Echeverria, 2005). In the same direction, human experience retains the characteristic of ambiguity in all action and social participation (Valsiner, 2014), being inherent to the dimension of aesthetic experience the maximum perennialization of this ambiguity, which is also realized in authentic metaphors. In this discussion proposal, we seek to understand the authenticity of the metaphor based on its potential to constitute itself as a surprising enunciation and generator of an affective, corporal and cognitive impact for the singer—once he also assumes the position of audience for his own verses.

Furthermore, we understand that the emergence of the metaphor, as an enunciation, is articulated to the multiple othernesses captured by the singer and that can be synthesized in the collective figure of the audience, through an aesthetic linking marked by a rupture with the common, insofar as the poet seeks to arouse an effect of resonance and enchantment in the other, both through the opening of meanings in his verses and through the rupture of expectations involved in the experience of temporality.

This subjective experience of temporality, a remarkable dimension of surprise/unexpectedness of the metaphorical alterity, implies three forms of simultaneity as proposed by Simão (2015), namely: (1) between the feeling of continuity and discontinuity that emerges in the relationships of the self with the othernesses and with the world, as to the perception of duration, interruption and totality; (2) between the feeling of distancing and approximation of the self in relation to the other in the course of time; and (3) between the feelings of permanence and transformation experienced by the self in itself and in the relation with culture, which the aforementioned author relates to the subjective field of tradition. Such confrontations bring out the disquieting experiences and thus establish conditions for the emergence of the novel. In this way, temporality would be both a social and psychic fabric, subjectively felt and strongly implicated in the dialogical, intersubjective and creative rhythms of the self-other-world relationship.

The Construction of the Empirical Data in the Life Context of the *Repentista*

As discussed, the creative process is a phenomenon “*distributed among multiple actors, creations, places and times*” (Glăveanu, 2014, p. 2), whose understanding needs to take into account the dynamics of interactions between the subjects, the personal and collective axiological dimension, as well as the historical elements that participate in the process. Thus, the methodological approach of the research that underlies this chapter sought to produce a holistic approach, in other words, it was guided by a comprehension of human phenomenon as a whole consisting of all others, which are placed in a tension state and are marked by the dimension of affect (Wagoner, 2011). The reference to the process is a methodological unfolding of the theoretical perspective, as a psychological study of creativity was conducted seeking to scrutinize the aspects related to the creative process in its complexity and dynamics, instead of focusing on the product of the action (Neves-Pereira, 2018).

Based on the aforementioned conception, the data construction followed the subsequent stages:

- Phase 1: ethnographic immersion of the researcher in the region of *Sertão do Pajeú* to establish an approximation to the community of practice.
- Phase 2: an individual interview with the participating singer, in which we scrutinized aspects of his trajectory in the *viola singing* and some of his conceptions about the activity.
- Phase 3: videography of a performance between the research participant and a regular partner. The motto/theme that triggered the singing was a previously unpublished creation by another artist from the region.
- Phase 4: transcription of the videos of the singing and selection by the researcher of aspects to be explored in the interview.
- Phase 5: commented exhibition of the singing, in which the participant was moved to the position of audience; the singer watched the entire recording of the singing and was asked to verbally highlight the moments that caught his attention.

In view of the effort of argumentative synthesis, interview fragments from phases two and four will be discussed to give more visibility to the interpretative dimensions on the emergence of metaphor in the creative process of the poetic dialogues of singing.

The Four-Axis Analysis Proposal

We understand each of the steps carried out as a methodological procedure as a living social interaction, using this adjective dear to Bakhtin (Marková, 2016) to compose the dynamic, relational and active character of the different situations carried out in the research. Therefore, speech is not conceived here as individual manifestation and/or fixed representation of a reality, but in the condition of enunciation. In Bakhtinian approach, the enunciation is the unit of dialogue in its relational dimension and, therefore, captures the dynamics of interaction between the subject and the otherness in the world. According to Guimarães (2016), the self-other interactions constitute the unit of analysis common to the dialogical approach; as such interactions are catalyzed in the dialogue between speakers, we turn to the enunciations in our analyses, seeking to identify the main tensions experienced by the singers during the creative action, in order to recover the affective-aesthetic and metaphorical-living dynamics proper to the emergence of the novel.

The interpretative axes were elaborated and recreated from the relationship between the empirical data constructed and the ontological and theoretical foundations assumed in the research, discussed throughout the chapters and summarized in this section.

Axis 1—Dialogical othernesses: In this interpretative axis, we analyzed the tensions related to:

- (a) the heterogeneity of significant othernesses, explicit or implicit, but implied in the enunciation, both in relation to the participant's life history and in relation to the dynamics of the action;

- (b) to potential exotopic movements, that is, movements related to efforts to imaginatively anticipate the actions of others, expanding and modifying the understanding of themselves and their own action in the world in the future of poetic dialogue and the emergence of metaphor.

Axis 2—Temporality: Through this axis, we interpreted the tensions in the way of experiencing time in the course of action—as proposed by Simão (2015) –, related to:

- (a) the dynamics between continuity and discontinuity perceived by the subject in the self-other-world relationships through allusions to rhythmic duration, speed and interruptions in singing;
- (b) the differences between the time of the self and the time of the other, an aspect emphasized from the anticipations made by the subject in relation to the audiences;
- (c) the permanencies and transformations of the self perceived by the singer.

Axis 3—Technique: In this axis, we interpret the enunciative fragments in their relationship with:

- (a) the instrument, as everything that alludes to the field of materiality that is recreated and updated in the self-other-object relationships. Here we situate the instrumentality of the viola, in its concrete and symbolic facets, as well as the semiotic instrumentality of the word, which the poet deals with when pursuing the demands of meter and rhyme;
- (b) the artifact, in the quality of what is produced during action, generically represented by the poetic stanza.

Axis 4—Aesthetics: This axis was dedicated to the interpretations of what can be captured in the enunciations about the affective, embodied and cognitive impact (feeling qualities) of the subject in his relationship with the world and with singing. This axis thus focused on semiotic clues of the enunciation about:

- (a) the emergence of live metaphors, provoked by the polyvalence of signs;
- (b) the effects of musicality (intonation and melody) signified by the subject, whether effects valued in their own history or viewed in relation to the audience;
- (c) the experience of gestures in oneself and in the other, as signs of an affective responsiveness.

We recognize that the formulation of these four interpretative axes comes from a methodological effort for the systematization and analysis of empirical data, although our theoretical understanding of the phenomenon characterizes it in a holistic approach. As a result, we propose that the dimensions focused on in each one of the axes happen simultaneously, are interdependent and irreducible to each other, the reason why we will seek through analytical reflection to fictionalize the holistic dynamics by which these axes are integrated in the creative process of the singer. We understand that this epistemological attitude is coherent with the dialogical approach, which values interpretations of holistic character and idiographic methodologies aimed at the generality of process, instead of the generality of result (Oliveira & Guimarães, 2016). Below are some examples of the analytical exercise proposed in the research conducted.

Excerpt from the Pre-Singing Interview

RESEARCHER: *In order to get to know you, I wanted to know, since you were born, what are the events you consider most important?*

INTERVIEWEE: *For us, while we live in the cultural environment, the important events for us are the cultural events, right? Like me, as a singer, it's the big festivals, right? Because, what happens? Festivals, in terms of events, they are big events, but there are those that are in strategic environments. Different ones. Like, the cast that's participating. What's the cast, right? Sometimes there is a cast (?). So, in the area of culture, the big events are these big meetings, in*

places with great social and cultural support. So, for me, they are big events. But there can also be simple events, right? A conversation circle, but depending on who's in it, it can also be a big event. In the area of culture, in the area of education there are also big events that we take part in, in the environment too, things that are connected to culture, right? Environmental, educational and cultural issues. But speaking as a cultural agent, a professional in the area that I am, a repentista, the big events that I take part in on a national level.

The field of enunciations in the interview allows us to interpret that being a singer and, therefore, participating in singing events is the point from which the participant recognizes his existence as a singer. Although the question alluded to his life trajectory, the field of meaning concerning his professional activity has eclipsed other understandings of the researcher question. For this reason, it is coherent for the speaker, in the position of participant in a research on the viola singer, to present to the researcher the remarkable events of his life from the position of the singing-self. He presents himself later in this extract as a “*cultural agent, a professional of the area I am, a repentista*”, attributing to this identity the notion that the remarkable events of his life are the singing events.

Also in this excerpt, we identify the preponderance of elements related to axis 1 (Dialogical Othernesses), when we interpret that the social other emerge as the stable definer of what the interviewee presents us as a significant event, when he refers to the “cast” of the great festivals, or, in the case of what he calls “simple events”, which become great events “depending on who is in it”. The “social and cultural backing” brings us back to the importance given by the subject to the sense of recognition, conquered in the relationship with others. This understanding of the relevance of the othernesses represented by peers for the definition of what is a great event goes along with the meanings that we captured in other moments of the interview with the singer. In this direction, we identify that the understanding of oneself as a professional singer is completely dependent on with whom the subject sings, with whom he is placed in a position of symmetry in the universe of singers, as we will see later on in this chapter.

- RESEARCHER:** *And, in general, which artists do you most admire?*
- INTERVIEWEE:** *Look, when we start in the art of singing, it's the singers, right? They are the singers that are already ahead of us, that already have a history, aren't they? They already have a curriculum, a trajectory (...) we end up mirroring them, don't we? Observing (...) There comes a time when you switch off, you want to be you. But in the beginning, when you're very beginner, very inexperienced, you stay in that shadow, admiring those singers who make a name for themselves and who are really in demand. There comes a time when you establish yourself, and you go (...) you're going to be you. But there are many, aren't there? Like Ivanildo Vilanova, right? Sebastião Dias, João Paraibano, Sebastião da Silva, Valdir Teles, older singers, who are ahead of us, aren't they? Rogério Menezes, Raimundo Caetano, others, right? These are the ones I'm talking about in the field of the culture of the viola singing.*

In this fragment, the interviewee, before mentioning the people he admires, reflects on the participation of these othernesses (axis 1) in the construction of his own position as a singer, which brings us back to the affective valence of tradition and recognition. We identify a tension between **admiration of others** and **self-affirmation** along the timeline signified by the subject (axis 2—Temporality), in which the beginning is marked by an indispensable sense of admiration, from which the “mirroring” is produced. This phase seems to be perceived as a situation of intense dependence and passivity, represented by the metaphor of being in the “shadow” of the experienced and recognised singers. We see that the subject, in this reconstruction, allows us to understand that his action was regulated by an expectation of “being you”, of “disconnecting” and assuming an autonomous place among the others. Therefore, we deduce from this excerpt a clearer crossing between axes 1 (Dialogical Othernesses) and 2 (Temporality), considering the interdependence between the dynamics of the voices (from the others and in the *self*) and the transformations perceived by the subject in his position in the world along the

psychologically perceived time. The initial mode of interactions of the I-singer-inexperienced with the other singers seems to constitute a period of waiting in which the subject needs to ventriloquize from the voices of those who already “make a name for themselves”, that is, are recognized.

RESEARCHER: *When you think back to when you were young, admiring these singers, do you remember what it was about them that you admired?*

INTERVIEWEE: *Oh, like that, I see it in my memory, like that, as an observer: the posture of the singers singing, the melodies, then you filter them, sing the most beautiful ones you think. There's that period of observation, right? 'Oh, how does he present himself?' It's (...) the type of violas they use, the way they play, the sounds they use. You have a bit of a vision. What's going well that you can bring to take you to them, to that higher group? Do you understand? So, these observations that I used to make.*

We verify that the initial period of the trajectory in singing is remembered by the subject as a phase in which he seeks to apprehend the dynamics of all the signs that make up the image of a viola singer. Looking at the interview as a whole, we observe that the elements mentioned in this excerpt remain as identification resources for the subject regarding his position as a singer and the evaluations he elaborates about the mastery of the *repentista*. The elements “posture”, “melodies”, “how he presents himself”, “type of violas they use” and “sounds” relate strongly to the senses of competence and professionalism of the singer, whose achievement leads to the “highest group”. We also highlight the reference to “sing those most beautiful ones you find”, indicating the function of affective resonance experienced by the subject from his singular position of audience in the construction of his own style.

In addition, we clearly see the porosity between the four interpretative axes: the interactions with the more experienced singers and the observation of the responsiveness they get from the audience in what “is going well” (axis 1—Dialogical othernesses) constitute the basis from which the subject will build his singer-self. In this interaction, guided by the

expectation of transmuting his own position to a higher one in a timeline affectively signified (axis 2—Temporality), the subject regulates his attention based on socially and historically constructed references in *viola singing* as to the signs that constitute a singer. These signs, in turn, relate to the field of materiality through the instrumentality of the viola—which is apprehended by the subject to be updated by him in the future—and through the semiotic artifact of the melody (axis 3—Technique). The particular way of relating singer-instruments-public engenders affective, linguistic and bodily impacts that direct the action of the subject (axis 4—Aesthetics).

The next passage occurred in the sequence, from a question in which we sought to scrutinize understandings and affections of the subject about the interaction with the partner in the singing. As it is a longer response, it is fragmented, in order to help the reading and synthesize the proposed interpretations.

RESEARCHER: *One curiosity I have is in relation to this moment of the construction of your verse. I keep thinking, to what extent does what one is saying at that moment have an impact on what the other is producing? How is that for you?*

INTERVIEWEE: *Look, like this (I) like a festival really (I) a festival, which is that, a stage thing, right? If (I) if I were to sing like “I’m going to sing my heart out”, maybe I would produce more. But you have to sing, be creative and be connected with the public, right? Having a certain effervescence on stage, so that it’s not that cold thing, that cold singing. I could even sing slower, and produce more. Then you won’t be so (...) that stage artist connected with the audience.*

In In this excerpt, we access one more face of the porosity between the four proposed interpretative axes. At first, we distinguish the duality between **effervescence** and **coldness**, and, also, the duality between **rhythm** and **production**, both tensioned in the singer-singing-othernesses

relationship in the course of action. The enunciation allows us to interpret that, by anticipating the expectation of the other (axis 1—Dialogical othernesses), the singer imposes on the action itself the demand for a specific rhythm, which is perceived by him and by the audience as fast (axis 3—Technique). The “effervescent” temperature is sustained by the perception of the high speed of the saying and maintains the connection with the audience (axis 4—Aesthetics). On the other hand, the “cold singing” translates a significant discontinuity between the singer’s time and the audiences’ time, causing a distance between them (“Then you won’t be so (.) that stage artist connected with the audience”) (axis 2—Temporality).

In a reading of the authoring process, we identify that the subject expresses accepting a loss in his production in order to preserve the rhythm that he anticipates as the audience’s expectation (“I could even sing slower, and produce more.”). The duality between **rhythm** and **production** is diffused by the enunciations concerning the action during the singing, allowing us to look at the dynamics between continuity and discontinuity perceived by the interviewee in his relationship with the public and with the partner (axis 2—Temporality, *a*).

That’s another thing you have to do. You have to sing, be creative and be in that expression connected with the public. Which is different from that ‘No, I’m going to relax a lot, I’m going to sing in my own time. I can produce more, but it’s going to be a cold performance, to have that connection with the public, right? And (...) then you (I) demand a lot from the person, because you have to sing, create and express yourself, and have that whole connection, that is, putting art in the presentation, right?’

In this passage, we ratify the previous interpretations, verifying that time is a significant regulator of the action. Faced with its irreversibility, the subject gives up trying to elaborate a better stanza in favor of the possible stanza, in order to sustain the connection with the audience. In this dynamics, the otherness is coercive and at the same time the objective of the singer’s action. Next, the interviewee expands this understanding to the otherness of the partner:

The question of (...) of (...) of when the other person is singing, like this (...) you have to give a rhythm to the singing too. I can say 'No, I've already put together my verse, but this one isn't right, I'll do another one'. But it's going to give a lot of space from one verse to another, it's going to end up cooling down (...) the presentation of the singing. You have to give it that rhythm, right? So you're going to have to stay well connected, and try to be creative and produce a lot in a short time.

The richness of this enunciation for our research lies in its introduction to the dynamics of attention to oneself and to the other, which we interpret to be fundamental for the effect that the subject seeks to have on the audience (“when the other is singing, like this (...) you have to give a rhythm to the singing too”). Once again, the question arises of regulating the search for the best possible stanza, maintaining the connection with the audience, through “hot” singing (“But it will give a very large space from one verse to another, it will end up cooling down (...) the presentation of the singing”). It is important to note that the singer prepares his verse, or at least part of it, while his partner is singing. However, these stanzas are not independent of each other, so the subject needs to coordinate between what he sings and what was previously sung by the partner.

Next, from the fragments of the commented exhibition interview, we will see that, for the participant, different ways of listening to the other in the course of action are at stake in his singing.

Excerpt from the Commented Exhibition Interview—Post-singing

Interviewee sings—The soul of a singer/Is wrapped up in the ; That his viola plays/In theatres and saloons; And the face of a /Is the face of .*baião Sertão*

RESEARCHER: *This metaphor is pretty beautiful [the soul of a singer/ Is wrapped up in the baião]*

INTERVIEWEE: *Yeah (...) we always try to use metaphors, right? That dry poetry, of the singer who has no the ability to use metaphors, the images (I) because poetry is image. That's*

what makes the difference. There are a hundred singers, which are the most poetic? The one who knows how to use metaphors, how to use images, because it's a characteristic of him.

In this enunciation, we identify the metaphor of the expanded vision as a measure to be a poet, which the subject presented to us in the first interview. The interviewee's understanding that poetry occurs as the construction of images ("That dry poetry, of the singer who has no ability to put the metaphors, the images (/) because poetry is image") brings us back to questions about the gaze that wanders and goes far away: the poet is in a constant flow of closeness and distance in psychological time and in imaginatively reconstructed spaces.

INTERVIEWEE: *No, I (/) I'm singing this (/) style there. I only think about the end (/) at the end, got it? I only think about the end of the stanza. Okay, this one. When he finished his, I already thought 'My mass is said/At the shrine of nature'. Then I (/) I have already finished the latter part. Then I go (/) then I start (/) I do the end, when the end is ready, I'll think what to say at the beginning. But sometimes we don't even think what to say at the beginning. Due to practice, we keep saying it. Without even thinking. Because there is time for us to prepare it.*

The richness of this enunciation for our study consists in the reconstruction made by the interviewee about the saying "without even thinking". As we initially understood, as soon as the partner finishes the first two verses, the **time for listening** ends and the **time for creating** begins. However, the order in which the poet elaborates the stanza is not necessarily the one in which the verses will be sung. The interviewee explains that he builds the ending first and then he may: (1) elaborate the rest of the stanza, from the beginning; or (2) construct the other verses already singing ("But sometimes we don't even think what to say at the beginning. Due to practice, we just keep saying it"). Accordingly, we interpret

the saying without thinking as something that unveils itself as alterity, a saying that crosses the subject and is made possible by mastery.

Seen in these terms, the subject's report makes explicit an understanding of improvisation as if it occurred in a follow-up, in which the "saying without thinking" would be in a field distinct from the inherited and familiar repertoires. Our interpretation is that the mastery, conquered throughout the trajectory in the practice of singing, is maintained in a constant tension with inspiration, an affective and intersubjective dimension proper to the situation of action, in a way of listening to the other, of dialoguing with the rhythmicity of otherness, of composing from the end to the beginning the aesthetic force of his poetic enunciations. It is in the junction between these fields that the improvisation of the singing of the viola emerges. In the following illustration, we seek to represent this interpretation.

Figure 5.1 shows the fields of practice and inspiration in constant tension, but with areas of greater or lesser approximation. From the tension zone between these two fields, emerges the improvisational field of emergence of the poetic metaphor. This tension is not annulled in any area between the two fields, remaining constant. The inferior arrow represents the time psychologically perceived by the subject as continuity, going

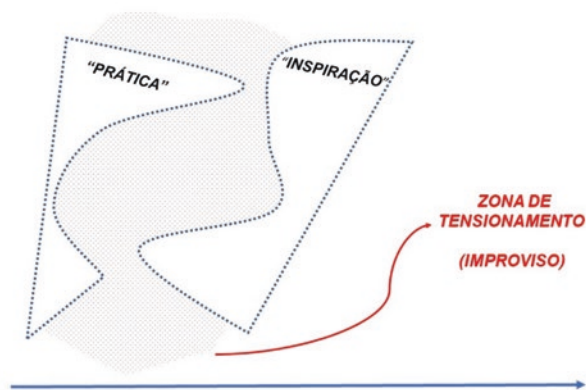


Fig. 5.1 Practice and inspiration in the *viola singing*. Prática = Practice. Inspiração = Inspiration. Zona de Tensionamento = Tension Zone. Improvise = Improvisation

from the past, in which the mastery was built, to the present, when the action takes place. We hypothesize that the production tends to be recognized as improvisation by the singer, dialoguing with a perspective of the future represented by the otherness that receives, recognizes and responds or not to his enunciations.

We interpret this idea by the approximation between axes 2 (Temporality) and 4 (Aesthetics), proposing that the dimension of poetic improvisation is given by the way the singer experiences the emergence of the verses, perceiving them in the dynamics of continuity and discontinuity between the moment of singing and of non-singing.

Final Considerations

Our findings strengthen a conception of creativity grounded on the subject's relationship with others and with the world, which occurs in the author's holistic and singular experience. The history of life, affective dispositions, value system and knowledge built in spontaneous or intentional situations participate in the construction of the verse, being tensioned in the work of perspectivation of the subject on its audiences.

We also highlight that we identified approximations of the four proposed axes among themselves, which confirms our idea of coexistence of the dynamics encompassed by each of them in the creative action. Thus, we question whether the axes formulated here could serve the interpretation of data in other artistic contexts or not. In the creative process discussed it became interesting to highlight the role of temporality in the emergence of the novelty. This temporality would be distinct from the eventicity of the course of life, in the Bakhtinian sense, or from an irreversible chronological temporality, or from a microgenetic reading.

Differently from this, temporality showed itself in the dialogical analysis undertaken as a fundamental fabric of the ways of feeling themselves, as actor-self and, consequently, of responding to the otherness of the singing composed by the singer and the audience. Briefly, subjective temporality emerged as an expanded mode of feeling, properly aesthetic, related to the rhythmicity of poetic meaning. This temporality was present in the metaphor composed in the singer's previous and inner speech

made “backwards”; in the dialogical anticipation of its effects in the otherness of the world; in the ways of intuition of an enunciation that would surpass him, with a certain degree of uniqueness; as a saying without thinking in such poetic dialogue. The temporality subjectively experienced seems to launch expressive clues about the creative processes in their intersubjective meshes of the self-other relationship and the ways of aesthetically getting in touch with oneself and with otherness.

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6

Creativity, Self-Development and Human Values: A Dialogical Perspective on Promoting a Democratic World

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The present chapter discusses the close relations between creativity and human values, based on a dialogical paradigm (Bakhtin, 1984; Linell, 2003, 2009; Marková, 2003a, 2016) and the study of moral development from a cultural semiotic perspective in Psychology (Branco, 2012, 2016; Valsiner, 2014, 2019). Conventional approaches to creativity tend to consider creativity as a phenomenon that mainly belongs to the realms of intellectual or artistic achievements and innovative productions. In this chapter, drawing on a dialogical and cultural perspective, I argue for a cultural approach to creativity (Glăveanu, 2010, 2014, 2017, 2019) and analyze the motivational roots of creativity and its role in the promotion of human development as a whole. I also explore the existing interconnections between creativity, the development of the dialogic self (Hermans & Gieser, 2012; Meijers & Hermans, 2018) and the psychological dimension of ethics and morality (Branco, 2012, 2018;

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Brinkmann, 2011). The text contemplates the elaboration, from a cultural and dialogical psychology perspective, of three intertwined issues that I see as necessary to provide the grounds for the arguments I put together in the chapter. In the first section, I aim at conceptualizing *value* as a theoretical construct in psychology, and its many relations with issues of creativity. This brief presentation's goal is to provide the necessary theoretical elements in order to make sense of the interconnections and mutuality between the development of the dialogical self-system and the ontogenesis of values.

Mainstream approaches to creativity tend to consider creativity mostly as an individual expression of mental processes that give rise to welcome or valued novel products (Simonton, 2004; Sternberg, 1988). Glăveanu (2014, 2017), however, has thoughtfully elaborated on the *cultural and social nature of creativity*, conceiving creative processes as culturally constituted and socially participatory, therefore, overcoming individualistic approaches to this complex psychological phenomenon. Today's participatory view of creativity (e.g., Clapp, 2017; Glăveanu, 2010, 2014; Hanson, 2015) value culture and sociogenesis, not individuals' brains. In this chapter, I claim for the role of creativity, as a hyper-generalized affective semiotic, motivational disposition—or value—in affording better conditions to the permanent building of democratic citizens and ethical societies. I explore and analyze the motivational and affective roots of creativity and its role—as a human value—to foster human development as a whole.

The interdependent and systemic relations between the multiple dimensions of human development, endorsed by a cultural and dialogical perspective in psychology will be highlighted in this chapter, as I focus upon how the ontogenesis of human values, the dialogical self and the emergence of creative processes are significantly intermingled over individuals' life trajectories. In my present theoretical elaborations, I particularly argue for the role of creativity to increasingly encourage the emergence of multiple perspectives concerning the Self and the world—that is, creativity invites openness to diverse world views and standpoints that, ultimately, reflect in individuals' experience of taking in, or actively internalizing, more democratic affective-semiotic positionings concerning people, therefore, concerning both moral and self issues.

The key axiom of our theoretical perspective is that self and culture *mutually constitute each other* over irreversible time (Branco, 2018; Valsiner, 2014). This means, on the one hand, that psychological processes leading to plural and multiple perspectives and positionings tend to flourish within cultural contexts or frameworks characterized by diverse and dialogical meaningful practices and experiences. Such multiple and meaningful experiences create the appropriate conditions for individuals to contribute, on the other hand, with cultural changes and new practices, rich in possibilities (Glăveanu, 2020) and open to diverse, plural venues for appropriate actions. Moreover, creative individuals promote novel practices that favor diverse perspectives that open the way for further cultivating individuals' creativity and cultural development, what is totally consistent with the emergence and empowerment of progressivist democratic values. Such practices and values, on their turn, favor the development of creative and open-minded individuals!

The same certainly happens with people raised in cultural contexts where practices and values of authoritarianism and oppression prevail, leading to the internalization and strengthening of anti-democratic personal dispositions and values. Notwithstanding, those cultural values and practices typical of certain contexts *do not determine* individuals' fate, or life trajectories. Actual possibilities for change may result from novel experiences and the agentic work of people engaged in fostering new practices and cultural meanings, breaking with previous beliefs, values and traditions. From an ethical and democratic perspective (Wagoner et al., 2018), this possibility of change is very welcome, and act as an effective way to promote openness, transculturality and inclusiveness, in opposition to current practices and meanings conducting to divisiveness, discrimination, exclusion and the violent dominance of one group ('*us*') upon the '*others*' (Berreby, 2008).

Contexts such as families and educational institutions stimulate cultural practices, intentionally and unintentionally. Consequently, they play a central role in promoting either practices and values associated with democracy, ethics and pluralism, or practices related to individualism, competition and oppression/dominance. The careful monitoring and analysis of the quality of interpersonal interactions characterizing each cultural context is, hence, fundamental to make sense of what we

are, *de facto*, encouraging among people, especially in terms of the self-development of our children and adolescents. Are parents and schools providing developing individuals with values of ethics and respect for human diversity? Are they promoting critical, multiple views or perspectives on all sorts of issues? Are they creating a dialogical, favorable affective-semiotic context for the appreciation and emergence of creativity, divergent thoughts and novelties? These are basic questions that should instigate analysis and mobilize serious investigations by psychologists.

In a world still characterized by radical ideologies, fanaticism and intolerance (Bronner, 2016), efforts to explore and examine ways to promote values concerning diversity, inclusion and multiple perspectives, which are definitely associated to creativity, consist of a necessary and fruitful venue for coconstructing democratic individuals and societies (Wagoner et al., 2018). As previously mentioned, in this chapter I will draw my arguments about the relations between culture, creativity, values and the dialogical self on the cultural psychology conceptual nature of creative processes (Glăveanu et al., 2015; Neves-Pereira, 2018). The concept of creativity here adopted, thus, is closely linked with cultural values and practices that embrace divergent thinking and performances, ethics, and feelings of openness to diversity and inclusion. Throughout the chapter, I underline the centrality of affective-semiotic processes in human development, with an especial attention to the ontogenesis of human values and the psychological dimension of ethics and morality. Then I will move to the topic of the dialogical self and its development (Branco, 2016; Branco et al., 2020) from the theoretical approaches of Cultural Psychology (Valsiner, 2014, 2019) and Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans & Gieser, 2012; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010; Meijers & Hermans, 2018). In short, my goal consists of providing a theoretical elaboration on how human values and motivation (Branco, 2021; Branco et al., 2020) are intrinsically interconnected with the development of creativity, the promotion of democratic selves (Hermans, 2018) and democratic societies.

Culture and Creativity

Cultural Psychology is a systemic theoretical cultural perspective that takes into account the intertwined nature of the various and complex dimensions of human development. Interconnections link all higher functions—such as language, memory, voluntary attention, imagination and creativity—to those deep-rooted dimensions of affect, feelings, motivation and personal values. Also, due to its systemic nature, the perspective demands, in order to propose consistent and coherent theoretical models for developmental phenomena, taking into account the web of relations between macro, meso and micro levels of analysis. That is, practices and values observed in daily face-to-face interactions occurring within micro systems as families or schools are conceived as interrelated with those occurring at meso (institutional) and macro (socioeconomic structures) systemic levels. For example, neoliberal societies tend to support individualism and competition among people (Branco, 2012; Sennett, 2013), while more collectivist societies depend on higher levels of cooperation (Triandis, 1995). Certainly, such webs of interrelations are much more complex than they seem at first sight, but the point is—from a psychological and sociogenetic cultural perspective—all levels of analysis are absolutely intermingled with each other.

The processes through which culture and subject coconstruct each other are known as *cultural canalization*. However, the word canalization must be taken with cautious, because individuals do not simply absorb or reproduce cultural messages and characteristics. If that was the case, no development or life itself would be possible, since the world changes and develops independently of the human existence. That is, development, change and adaptation to new circumstances are essential to our survival on this planet. What characterizes humans, as Vygotsky nicely explained (1978), is our meaning-making capacities—our abilities to use signs and instruments—and our agentive condition to actively change and flexibly adapt to unexpected events and situations occurring along our life trajectories. Human development and creativity processes, hence, practically coalesce with each other, for both entail the emergence of novelties and changes in individuals' self-systems over time. Human agency, boosted

up by autonomy, can therefore introduce different nuances, as well as brand new characteristics to previous cultural habits, practices and problem solutions, so contributing to the advancement of both individuals and societies.

Considering the dynamics of cultural canalization processes, and the significant power of affectivity in such processes, it is worth analyzing some of the most likely ways through which each individual's internalization of culture takes place. Two contrastive examples may help understand internalization dynamics. At face value, a child raised within the context of an extremely religious family would, according to the notion of canalization, very likely develop as a religious and pious person. However, if the affective quality of this child's relation to his/her parents (or a significant other) is poor, inconsistent or troubled, the child would probably resist to their values and principles, and internalize and develop exactly the opposite values and beliefs they try to impose upon child (Valsiner, 2014). In sum, cultural canalization, operating together with individual's affective dispositions and, also, together with the person's agency, always consists of a complex and transformative process, which characteristics and operational modes must be intensively and extensively analyzed.

In our Laboratory of Cultural Psychology at the University of Brasília we have carried out some studies that corroborate the above-mentioned theoretical elaborations. I can illustrate the operation of cultural canalization processes by referring to the results obtained by three specific research projects. The first was a quasi-experimental study, aimed at investigating the effects of intensive participations of six young children (about three-years-old) in semi-structured play contexts. In our analysis, we focused upon the quality of peer interactions, and the time spent in each kind of peer interactions (Branco & Valsiner, 1997). Children were designated to be part of two triads—each composed by two boys and one girl—which, then, participated in semi-structured activities during six consecutive sessions, followed by a test situation. Triad A engaged in cooperative activities, and triad B, in competitive activities. Activities were organized by researchers to promote either cooperation or competition by the selection of materials, rules and by a continuous flow of suggestions provided by the adult who supervised children's play. Along the sessions, and most

importantly, during the test situation—which involved a cooperative task—the performance of each triad, A and B, resulted being amazingly different. Children who participated of the cooperative triad cooperated with each other for almost 100% of the test duration, while the other triad (competitive) did so in just a couple of occasions, spending their time subtly disputing a turn to act individually. The results were, actually, stunning (Branco & Valsiner, 1997).

Other two studies were designed in ways to also explore the role of cultural practices and beliefs. Palmieri and Branco (2015) carried out a study to investigate how two teachers, of different preschools, would organize and develop a cooperative activity with their respective preschoolers. The activity, though, should be selected and organized by the teachers themselves, because one of our purposes was to learn about teachers' own conceptualizations of cooperation. One of our questions was: What are their criteria for selecting an activity as “cooperative?”. Another objective of this study was to perform a microgenetic analysis of each teacher's interactions with children concerning the way children interacted with each other. Results, however, showed that one of the teachers, in contrast to what we asked her to do, developed a competitive activity, while the other teacher developed an individual activity in which students contributed, one by one, to compose a single drawing!

The study by Neves-Pereira and Branco (2015) was similarly designed, but the focus was upon creativity: two teachers of different preschools were asked to plan and carry out an activity with their students to promote creative processes among them. Again, the intention was to verify teachers' conceptualizations and interactions with children regarding, in this case, to fostering creativity. One teacher was able to partially do so, but the other, however, developed an activity in which students had to imitate, exactly, the production of a little origami paper dog! In both studies (Palmieri & Branco, 2015; Neves-Pereira & Branco, 2015) results noticeably suggested that teachers were not familiar to concepts such as cooperation or creativity, but in both we verified that the quality of *their respective students' interactions very much corresponded to the actual way* they instructed, oriented and provided feedback to their pupils. Results markedly demonstrated the operation of powerful cultural canalization processes.

Now, one question pertaining to the issue of creativity naturally follows: “Do cultures that value and promote creativity in their institutions favor the development of creative individuals?” The answer to this question is yes, in case such cultural contexts *actually* canalize creativity. After all, when social and pedagogical practices within a specific community encourage the search for plural, diverse pathways towards innovations and problem solutions, we expect creativity to flourish. But what in fact happens in today’s world? Today, more than ever, contemporary societies and institutions seem to discursively converge towards ideas of innovation and creativity, particularly when globalization, the internet and new technologies force their way into people’s everyday experiences. We cannot deny that the huge number of challenges regarding present and future problems need to be addressed, especially, for instance, issues related to climate change and sustainability, now becoming increasingly prominent, dominating discussions about the future perspectives to our species.

However, as we focus upon what is actually happening within contexts like schools—and other conservative microsystems as families and religious institutions—we notice that the daily routine within such educational contexts struggle to remain the same, despite parents’ and educators’ claims for the importance of fostering creativity among their children and adolescents. This is, no doubt, a noteworthy paradox. Traditional pedagogical and social practices still pervade students’ experiences, and when they eventually question or disagree with old practices of teaching-learning, students are systematically disapproved or sanctioned. As educators do so, acting in such a contradictory way, the message conveyed is “you should *not* question, be creative or try to be autonomous within my classroom!”. In such contexts, creative individuals are frequently seen as subversive, and in need of extra control.

Many are the paradoxes and challenges of contemporary life, though. Among them, rises the question: How should we deal with issues as creativity and ethical-moral development with children and adolescents? Regarding creativity, we know for sure that, on the one hand, there are rising uncertainties concerning the future, such as the risk of skills and capacities learnt at school rapidly becoming outdated. Consequently, emerges an overwhelming need for people to open up their minds to plural and diverse pathways to better, and successfully, adapt to possible

new life circumstances. On the other hand, there are powerful waves of conservatism, traditionalism, anti-globalization, and nationalist ideologies that oppose any form of progressivism, development or social change, concerning the functional and structural foundations of our societies. As a result, contradictions proliferate. For example, regarding ethical-moral values, most official educational discourses affirm the importance of justice, empathy, cooperation and solidarity among people, but, instead, institutional practices consistently promote competition and individualism among children and adolescents! Taking into account this present scenario, my point here is that we need to invest our efforts and energy to promote substantial changes in the way we interact with each other, particularly within contexts like schools, because these institutions still consist of the most likely space for prevailing over old habits, practices and traditions in order to innovate. In the end, schools still are possible breeding places for cultivating plural thinking, diversity and democracy.

Culture, Dialogical Self System and Ontogenesis of Values: The Role of Hypergeneralized Affective-Semiotic Fields

Progressivism, democracy and developmental innovations are naturally linked to issues of creativity, and should be seen as the expression of ethical social values. In this section I present and elaborate on the conceptualization of the Self as a dialogical system (from a *Dialogical Self Theory* approach, see Hermans, 2001, 2018; Hermans & Gieser, 2012) and on the concept of values (understood as *Hypergeneralized Affective-Semiotic Fields*, Valsiner, 2014), stressing their role in guiding human perceptions, feelings, thoughts and actions (Branco, 2016, 2021).

The Dialogical Self System and its Development

Many theorists have contributed to the recent dialogical turn in psychology and other social sciences. The dialogical foundation of human phenomena has been nicely elaborated, at epistemological, theoretical and

methodological levels, by distinguished authors from several areas of scientific knowledge (Bakhtin, 1984; Linell, 2009; Lopes de Oliveira et al., 2020; Marková, 2003b; Matusov, 2009; among others). As they claim, the very nature of human experience is built on individuals' dialogue with alterity, and the study of otherness is central to the understanding of human psyche (Simão, 2007). Moreover, in the last three decades, psychology has witnessed the fruitfulness and advancement of the Dialogical Self Theory, elaborated by Hubert Hermans and colleagues (Hermans, 2001; Hermans & Gieser, 2012; Meijers & Hermans, 2018; among others), which has contributed to our understanding and theoretical development on how the self-system is plurally configured, and dynamically changes across the person's life-span.

The Dialogical Self Theory is based on contributions by Bakhtin, Mead and James (Hermans, 2001), and it argues that the individual self is composed by multiple voices (named as *I-positionings*, Hermans, 2001; or *Dynamic Self Positionings*, Branco et al., 2020). Voices, impregnated with affect, derive from significant bonds with those special social others the person encounters along life experiences. Such multiple voices, or positionings, continuously interact—or dialogue—with each other, as they constitute what Branco et al. (2020) designated as the *Dialogical Self-System*. The dialogical self system is, therefore, composed by multiple I-Positionings that emerge from the individual's relations to significant social others, and are in constant dialogue with each other. Each I-positioning corresponds to specific *Hypergeneralized Affective-Semiotic Fields - HASF*, which, in a way, confers some stability and sense of continuity to the Self. To understand their role upon human psyche, though, it is crucial to present—although briefly—the major aspects of Valsiner's concept of *HASF*, and his Self-Regulatory Affective-Semiotic model (2014). Valsiner's proposed theoretical concept designated as *Affective-Semiotic Field* derives from his model of self-regulation (2014). The model tries to make sense of the operation of each individual's motivational system, as it establishes four levels of people's making sense of themselves and the world, over their developmental trajectories. Affective-semiotic fields emerge and gradually become stronger or weaker as individuals live their relational experiences along life-span. The more a field get energized, the more it exerts a regulatory

power over the person's psyche, eventually becoming hypergeneralized, acquiring the characteristics of the psychological construct commonly known as value (or prejudice).

Hypergeneralized Affective-Semiotic Fields: Values and Prejudices

The model consists of four layers (levels) regarding human motivational dimension. At level 1, biological sensitivity practically prevails, and semi-osis, in its minimum, starts operating, that is, it acquires its meaning-making function. One tends to approach pleasant experiences and avoid uncomfortable or harmful ones. At level 2, due to the development of language, individuals are able to explain their feelings into specific words, then, characterized as specific affective-semiotic signs designated as emotions (rage, fear, joy, etc.). At level 3, linguistic descriptions of people's feelings concerning what really matters to them, and motivate their actions, become increasingly difficult. At level 4—conceptualized as a post-verbal level—the power of hypergeneralized and deeply affect-laden fields make it very difficult to express—or even recognize—the very quality of the hypergeneralized affective-semiotic fields. This is why level 4 is conceptualized as 'hypergeneralized', exerting a strong impact over the other levels as people try to make sense of life events and, also, orienting the way people act and interact with the world. In short, hypergeneralized affective-semiotic fields—values and/or prejudices—guide the person's interactions and experiences across life. Both values and prejudices, conceived as hypergeneralized affective-semiotic fields, powerfully regulate our lives. While values work providing the motivation to approach and achieve certain goals, prejudices operate in similar ways, except they strongly push the individual away from specific people and ideas, perspectives and experiences, giving rise to rejections of everything seen as disagreeable, dangerous or detrimental to one's well-being.

Values, hence, filter our perceptions, inducing feelings, thoughts and actions in complex ways throughout our life trajectories. They represent the utmost hierarchical level of human motivation, which command, or better regulate, our dialogical self-systems. Values sieve the way we

conceive and interpret all sorts of internal and external events, mobilizing us to approach and achieve certain goals and objectives, acting according to directions set by the dominant hypergeneralized affective-semiotic fields in some specific contexts. The complex system comprising the dialogical self, though, is totally dynamic and developmental. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the ontogenesis of such hypergeneralized affective-semiotic fields, namely, values and prejudices. In fact, their configuration takes years to somewhat stabilize (when they do), and its systemic quality imposes a dynamic mobilization to the way values and prejudices organize themselves, emerge, get empowered and, eventually, fade away over people's lives. The only aspect of values development we can be sure about is the mutual constitution of values (and beliefs) and their corresponding practices (namely, practices that favor those specific values).

The terminology *Dynamic Self Positionings*, adopted by Branco et al. (2020), resulted from our studies in the Laboratory of Cultural Psychology (University of Brasília) as we investigated the development of the dialogical self in young children, what also allowed us to elaborate a basic model for the ontogenesis of human values (Branco et al., 2020). In one study, for instance, we analyzed how young children, experiencing an educational transition from preschool to Elementary school, eventually developed new affective-semiotic fields that led them to new Dynamic Self Positionings. The example of a five-years-old girl can well illustrate a dialogical self-system's possible development.

The girl, while at preschool, was very popular and appreciated by her peers, and during the research, she made clear how important it was, for her, to be seen and see herself as "beautiful". Most of her play and conversations with peers and adults were related to a specific Affective Semiotic Field we designated as "Beauty", and she was proud of herself. However, in the new school context, no one seemed to value her beauty, being smart or intelligent was valued as particularly important. As she interacted within a context characterized by a new value, she became insecure and a new positioning—"I-as-non intelligent"—emerged and dominated the others, making her very sad about herself. This brief description of a detected change in the girl's dialogical self-system is here presented to illustrate how values—and prejudices—ingrained within specific cultural contexts *do* impact over human being's development. To

recognize the power of such cultural canalization processes, hence, entails the conclusion concerning the centrality of human values to human development; consequently, *if values of creativity are cultivated and fostered within cultural contexts as families and schools, individuals may eventually internalize them*, and start perceiving, sensing, acting and interacting and relating to the world, in general, according to creativity premises and goals.

My point, in this section was to provide the reader with some necessary theoretical elements in order to claim that creativity can, and should, become a *Hypergeneralized Affective-Semiotic Field*—a value-laden construct—*associated to moral and ethical goals*, like embracing diversity, assuming plural and progressive perspectives, and promoting democratic practices and structures in human society. If we can foster creativity as a value, we may promote not only the ontogenesis of ethical-moral values but the development of human beings, especially the development of their dialogical self-systems. In the next section, I call the reader's attention to the intrinsic connection between creativity and affectivity, a topic not very much taken into account in the literature.

Creativity, Affect and Motivation

Most of the literature on creativity, for a long time, tended to highlight the association of creativity with divergent thinking (or cognition), favorable social and environmental stimuli and personality characteristics (Fleith & Alencar, 2003). Nevertheless, more recently we find contributions by key authors in the field of developmental psychology and creativity who stress the role of feelings and emotions, that is, affective-laden motivation, in fostering creative processes. Corazza and Agnoli (2016), for example, ponder that we will not actually understand

The generation of an original and effective idea in a human mind if we do not include emotional phenomena into the process. In other words, we propose a change of point of view in looking at creativity, a shift from a cognition-driven to an emotion-driven point of view. (p. 48);

Later on, in their chapter, the authors add that “powerful negative emotions (sadness, anger, depression, etc.) deriving from negative evaluations of our creative products are disincentives in the undertaking of creative activities” (Corazza & Agnoli, 2016, p. 62), what is undoubtedly true. Hence, in most instances of creative processes and the production of creative outcomes, it is possible to investigate and find the work of affectivity and emotions, mobilized by personal goals and values that may generate, or lead to the acquisition of the necessary skills, competences, resilience and perseverance to achieve one’s creative objectives.

Psychology used to describe the motivational dimensions of creativity as “personality traits” found in those considered as geniuses. Creators as Einstein, Alan Turing, Beethoven, famous painters, writers and so on are deemed as exceptional and absolutely unique personalities endowed with special individual gifts to create in their respective fields. New theoretical perspectives on creativity conceive it as a higher psychological process, though, and acknowledges the existence of creativity in everyone. They argue for the sociocultural nature of what has been now designated as participatory creativity in particular cultural contexts (Glăveanu et al., 2015). Together with recognizing the role of cultural contexts and social others in encouraging creative processes, the development of individual’s characteristic—such as curiosity, unquietness, initiative and perseverance—the presence and operation of affects and emotions work as a generalized hunger for freeing oneself from any constraints, in order to reach the “impossible” through all possible ways one can imagine. All this motivational impulse to create novelties is permeated by strong, deep, affective roots, which include enthusiasm, playfulness, emotional excitement, passion, and the willingness to confront challenges and search for original alternatives to reach one’s goals. Moreover, affectivity nurtures the experience of enjoying the process of creation for its own sake. Darwin’s adventurous disposition to confront possible serious threats while travelling long distances was surely mobilized by intense and persistent feelings and emotions (Sís, 2010).

In a recent book, Glăveanu (2020) explains how the concept of *mobility* is central to provoke the expansion of horizons and perspectives of individuals, and how this collaborates to their development as human

beings. The way I see it, as we move—both physically and symbolically, through imagination—we can amplify our affective-semiotic perspectives regarding all sorts of issues, and this can lead us to remarkable developments and creative power. Imagination (Tateo, 2016; Zittoun, 2020), in fact, plays a very special role in creativity, which cannot be overestimated (Vygotsky, 2004). It does open an infinite array of possibilities that definitely enrich human options and perspectives for both immediate and long-term futures. However, as imagination frees thinking from immediate conditions, it is seen sometimes as dangerous, entailing social constraints and limitations that can arise from different spheres of life, especially through messages of affective kind sent out to inhibit the subversion of the social order, or loss of control. Again, a necessary question must trigger investigative efforts: Why creative processes are not cultivated in our societies, if there is an apparent unanimity concerning the positive and productive impact of mobility, challenges, imagination and novelty constructions on human development? How to make sense of such contradictions in the social practices found, in general, in our institutions and societies? Here it is interesting to turn back our attention to school contexts.

Tanggaard (2019) analyzes what happens within schools, and criticizes their persistence in adopting traditional goals and methods. She denounces the risk of reducing schools to simply produce outputs that result in measurement scales. As she points out, teachers' efforts are basically directed to increase students' quantified performances in academic tests, what leaves creativity and socio-moral objectives out of the picture. Her major concern is that teachers do not work with students those subjects that they—students—are actually motivated to study and investigate. In her own words, "My point is that this [learning] requires that absorption and passion for a subject are held as key drivers to this ambition." (p. 165). She is against the "conservative focus in schools on traditional subjects and cultural reproduction" (p. 166), and argues for the "absorption in and enchantment with the subjects that are seen as a driving force [to students]" (p. 168). In reference to the way creativity is seen in school contexts, she ponders

This habit of locating creativity in individuals, with a focus on connections between intelligence and creativity, personality, mind-set, neurological correlates, etc., continues today. Here, idea generation and divergent thinking are typically used as measures of creativity or creative potential, and this is also what is typically taught in schools when increased creativity is the goal (p. 173)

The persistence with which schools hang on conservative and traditional aims and methodologies reflects a fear (a powerful emotion!) of losing control over young people. The possibility that students might get empowered and, in some way, challenge teachers' authority—that of almighty wise adults—and change the course of events within educational institutions—bringing forth new topics to study and discuss, new methods and activities, etc.—actually frightens teachers and the school staff, who prefer avoiding uncertainties and keep their presumed absolute authority over the functioning of schools. However, students know better and, sooner or later, formal education will be forced to change and find alternative pathways to keep up to societies' demands. Societies' institutions struggle to remain in the past by clinging to conservative values and traditions hoping this could delay such changes, but they cannot avoid the empowerment of students forever if societies do not fall prey to totalitarian regimes. Next, I examine the role of students' autonomy and protagonism within educational contexts.

Autonomy, Cooperation and Agency: The Power of a Dialogical Paradigm

Up to now I have argued for the centrality of promoting values of openness, evolution, search for innovations, developmental changes and ethical principles of diversity and inclusion, in order to cultivate creative individuals and groups. Notwithstanding, another aspect of the dialogical self-system has to be addressed and examined: here I refer to the dimension of autonomy and human agency. Although these issues are frequently referred as something to be nurtured especially among the new generations, what we observe, as mentioned above, is that in most

countries schools are largely based on the notion that learning is an individual achievement fundamentally reached by individual efforts and activities. This overwhelming emphasis on individual activities and achievement under the supervision—or command—of teachers represent a significant obstacle to the development of cooperation *and* autonomy among children and adolescents (Borges de Miranda, 2017; Palmieri & Branco, 2015; Tanggaard, 2019). The promotion of cooperation is hindered because rarely students are asked to participate in collaborative tasks or activities, and autonomy is usually averted because usually students are expected to strictly follow the rules and instructions set by their teachers. And teachers impose on them a narrow margin to exercise experimentation, innovation or alternative forms of participating in the classroom. However, many studies have largely demonstrated the powerful effects of students' protagonism regarding their own development (Seedat et al., 2017), stressing the positive results obtained by teachers who provide students with plentiful opportunities to cooperate with each other (Slavin, 1995). When students are invited and incited to take initiatives and act with autonomy—in other words, treated as co-protagonists of their own learning and development—they experience the opportunity to activate their agencies to engage in educational processes, thus mobilizing their motivation to learn and act creatively, assuming their responsibility toward others. Notwithstanding, within contexts structured by rules oriented to heteronomy and disciplined obedience, those who practice their agency and autonomy are seen as subversives and problematic. If the educational goal is to favor the development of engaged, responsible, creative and autonomous individuals to face the complex uncertainties of the future as adults, schools should increasingly adopt a dialogical paradigm, which necessarily demands teachers to listen to their students' voices and promote their actual participation in school's activities.

Collaborative practices associated with the encouragement of autonomy and creativity are definitely the best educational route to develop solidary, empathic, self-confidant and democratic citizens. Such empowerment of students may contribute to the development of participatory creativity (Clapp & Hanson, 2019), as well as favor the sense of social responsibility educators so intensely look forward to developing among

their students. Schools' contexts organized according to a dialogical paradigm, and to the guidelines of a dialogical pedagogy (Matusov, 2009, 2018), invite students to cultivate ethical values, which provide the quality of the social fabric that binds us together. Ethical values positively relate to thoughtful improvisation, flexibility, search for the possible, novel ways to solve problems, as well as bring about fruitful and innovative questions. As a whole, such experiences will certainly favor individuals' and societies' development. Nevertheless, if schools persist in maintaining their traditional social and pedagogical practices predominantly monological, under the entire control of the teacher, the achievement of the above-mentioned goals would be very much unlikely. That is why many theorists and educators keep insisting on the importance of adopting a dialogical paradigm in schools' contexts (Freire, 2013; Matusov, 2018). When dialogical practices of communication become the rule in cultural contexts such as families, work places and other institutions, chances of co-constructing successful pathways to the constant improvement of democracy may significantly raise.

Acknowledging once again the central role of affectivity and emotions on human development, we are led to conclude that it is the fear of losing control and facing uncertainties that make difficult the implementation of a paradigm shift, for fear generates strong resistances to change among educators. Why is it so difficult, painful and frightening to empower students? After all, a redefinition of teachers' role within the classroom does not mean teachers would lose their natural authority over students. Teachers' professional duties and capabilities are absolutely central to their function as social mediators for knowledge construction and students' development within school contexts. What would change under a dialogical paradigm is that they would need to actually listen to students, take into account their arguments and suggestions, and co-construct with them trust relationships thereby encouraging creativity, inclusiveness and prosocial relations among everyone.

The next section aims at articulating the deep interconnections between creativity, values and the dialogical self and how they all contribute to the improvement of today's democracies. As previously said, my major point in this chapter is to provide arguments regarding how the promotion of

democratic selves are inherently linked to creativity and the development of ethical relations among people, what may certainly open up possible roads to sustain and enrich democracies.

Creativity, Values, and the Dialogical Self: Pathways for the Co-Construction of Democracies

It's very common to think of creativity as some very special ingredient in people's personality that leaps out like a bubbling spring. A great many people take an almost fatalistic view. You have it or you don't have it ... My own feeling is that a very substantial number of people are potentially creative but it's imprisoned. It's imprisoned by fears they develop very early, or by self-estimates they develop very early or by the constrictions of convention and so on that tell them that they can only function in certain ways ... People can... grow beyond the fears, ... if they get the affirmation, sometimes on their own, sometimes with the help of mentors, that will bring out what's in them (interviewed participant in Gute et al., 2008, p. 355)

Creativity from a cultural, social and developmental theoretical standpoint is completely in tune with human values related to mobility, the search for the possible, the centrality of one's purposes (Hanson, 2021), and the person's preparedness to profit and develop, as a reaction to serendipity (Busch, 2021). Such sensitivity to curiosity and change also benefit from negotiating diverse, plural perspectives and conflicts, and tensions emerging from genuine dialogical practices. Dialogical practices deliver the energy or motivation needed to produce actual transformations in selves and societies. However, flexibility and openness to transformations cannot grant, just by themselves, human development.

Hermans (Hermans et al., 2017; Hermans, 2018) thoughtfully elaborates on how the dialogical self can gain and get empowered as it develops a vast array of democratic I-Positionings, which allows the person to relate to diverse people and multiple sociocultural perspectives. Hermans' argument—and so is mine—is that there is a reciprocal constitution

between democratic selves and democratic societies. In other words, as we foster opportunities to developing subjects—particularly, children and adolescents—to encounter, relate and experience other people, other ideas and other cultures, the dialogical self may create other I-positionings, therefore becoming more democratic. In short, arguments presented by Hermans and colleagues (Hermans & Bartels, 2020; Hermans et al., 2017; Meijers & Hermans, 2018) explain how dialogical-democratic selves may favor democratic society and vice-versa.

I find Hermans' considerations very relevant to my present arguments, but I think it is necessary to stress a particular aspect of human developmental phenomena worth analyzing. As argued before, affectivity, values and emotions lie at the core of psychological processes. Nonetheless, the sheer capacity to know, and take the perspective of others does not suffice to grant authentic democratic selves or democratic motivation. Values and affective dispositions to actually encounter and relate to others are absolutely essential to entail true collaboration and cooperation among people. Cooperation is intrinsically linked to experiences of empathy, solidarity and identification with collective interests, and experiences deriving, and impregnated, of these values we designate as moral and ethical.

To summarize, the promotion of creativity—understood as openness to multiple perspectives at both cognitive and affective psychological dimensions—consists of a venue for the cultivation of democratic cultural values and moral development, and vice-versa. Dialogical cultural practices engendering novelties, therefore, pave the way to individual and social development through negotiations between multiple perspectives, giving rise to the emergence of a constant critical appraisal of social values, practices and society's institutions.

Conclusions

In the present chapter, I argue that mainstream approaches to creativity tend to consider it as mostly pertaining to the domain of intellectual achievements and innovative productions. In this chapter, departing

from a dialogical and cultural theoretical perspective, I explore the motivational roots of creativity and its role—as a human value—to foster human development as a whole. I especially address the effect of both a creative mindset and a motivational disposition—oriented to the very development of the individual's dialogical self-system (Branco et al., 2020; Hermans & Gieser, 2012)—upon the reciprocal constitutive dynamics occurring between individuals' creativity, open-mindedness, ethics and a democratic culture. I underlined the centrality of affective-semiotic processes in human development, with an especial attention to the ontogenesis of human values and to the psychological dimension of ethics and morality.

The interdependent and systemic relations between the ontogenesis of values and the dialogical self was analyzed as I argued for the significant role of creativity to encourage the emergence of multiple affective-semiotic perspectives concerning ethical, collectively-oriented, and self-related issues. Throughout the chapter I argued that plethoric psychological processes need to be encouraged, so it can flourish within cultural contexts, by the active fostering of dialogical and meaningful experiences. As such experiences take place, they may create the appropriate conditions for the emergence and development of diverse, plural and democratic practices, cultural values and self-positionings. Contexts as families and educational institutions can then engage in stimulating cultural and pedagogical practices with this goal in mind. The wide-spread increase of radical ideologies, fanaticism and intolerance surely demands researchers and educators to investigate, create and implement effective practices to promote values concerning diversity and inclusion, what ultimately consists of a sure fruitful venue to the co-construction of democratic individuals and societies in the contemporary world. To sum up, when creativity is promoted as a human value, through the active encouragement of dialogical practices, we intentionally favor the co-construction of democracy and the self-development of individuals committed to democratic moral values.

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7

The Soul of the Creative Process: A Commentary by a Cannibal

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While reading these two chapters (da Silva & Pinheiro, 2022; Nigro & Guimarães, 2022) I reached a disconcerting conclusion upon my own identity—I *have been a cannibal in psychology for fifty years*. Since the beginning of my psychology studies in 1971 I have been—systematically, as instructed by “the scientific literature”—consuming the full richness of the human soul under various disguises of “behavior”, “cognition”, and even—“culture”. Occidental psychology has exiled the richness of the soul by calling it a new name—“self” or “identity”—while musicians of any society or historical time embrace it in their soul-shattering performances.

Why such puritan attitude in psychology to the richness of the subjectivities of human beings? Why cannot academic psychology study precisely that kind of subjective complexities that are natural part of our existential worlds? A partial answer to that question is the historical avoidance of the nature of the *psyche* to be understood as a functioning

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whole (Diriwächter & Valsiner, 2008). New efforts to restore the focus on the whole have been introduced (Guimarães, 2020; Valsiner, 2021) but how these become elaborated remains the task for future. The whole content of the present volume is a part in this making of the future—creativity is not a state of affairs as it is, but a torturous process of arriving at new knowledge.

So—what is the new in the two chapters I am commenting on? At first glance—nothing. Musicians invent and play their favourite-to-be tunes anywhere, and the feeling for the need to improvise in music and in life is ever-present. Yet on some occasions the music is made by crossing real or invisible borders. In 1999 Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said started the project bringing Palestinian and Israeli classical musicians to play together in Johann Wolfgang Goethe's home town of Weimar. Ideological, geographic, and cultural borders were crossed by bringing divided persons together with a joint goal of creating a whole—an orchestral performance. This first effort has developed into a Worldwide recognized example of not only good music but also as a social experiment of overcoming artificial political oppositions. The principle—creating joint activity goals to reduce and overcome inter-group oppositions—is classic social psychology (Sherif et al., 1961). Yet putting it into practice—whether in Nigro's house or some orchestra podium around the World—is not only a promising local practice but a further demonstration that there are general principles in psychology that work despite the prevailing cannibalistic ideologies of “the empirical science” that Occidental psychology pretends to be (Lindstad et al., 2020; Smedslund, 1995). The prevailing pseudo-empiricism in psychology can be—slowly but surely—overcome by carefully orchestrated look at the context-bound microgenesis of mutual trust. Music may afford such efforts better than our usual preponderance for talking (Klempe, 2016), since its polyphonic opportunities can capture in greater fullness the sentiments Nigro & Guimarães, 2022) nicely outline.

The relevant feature that Nigro and Guimarães (2022) describe is the step-by-step overcoming of the resistance by the Guarani musicians to joining the musical joint performance with the outsider. Such resistance is a universal psychological phenomenon (Chaudhary et al., 2017) and is crucial for creativity. It creates the time frame for development of

trust—in others and in oneself—which is the universal meta-communicative pacemaker for human creativity (Branco & Valsiner, 2004). Such trust is not a sea of subjective bliss in which a person subjectively bathes in one's mind, but a perception and co-construction of mutually converging collaborative actions and their corresponding feeling into the genuine nature of the other's reciprocity.

Da Silva and Pinheiro (2022) look in detail into the subjective and dialogical dimensions of the emergence of the novelty in viola singing. The crucial discovery reported in this chapter is the actor's focus on the imagined and desired final state (the end of the song) leaving it to the intuitive unfolding process of the singer's actual creation of the melody. (*"But sometimes we don't even think what to say at the beginning. Due to practice, we keep saying it. Without even thinking. Because there is time for us to prepare it"*). Such intuitive unfolding process in a here-and-now performing is of course prepared by many hours of mundane singing practices—it is an example of educated intuition that makes on the spot improvisation possible. The focus that is planned is the ending—the *cadence* in terms of music theory, that creates the sense of closure to the temporal gestalt. Similarly the last sentence of the short story (see Vygotsky's analysis of Bunin—Valsiner, 2015), or the end symbols of architectural constructions (Theodor Lipps' *Endigungsymbol*—Valsiner, 2018). We set up trajectories for acting towards the future—imaginatively creating the future end states towards which we act. On the path to that end state we can create different pathways—and this is the domain for improvisations. These can be started by simple happenings. Describing a particular instant of the emergence of improvisation in the act of jazz play, the pianist Herbie Hancock—accompanying Miles Davis—reported one such incident:

The music was building, the audience was right there with us, and at the peak of Miles' solo on "So What" I played a really wrong cord. Miles took a breath and played a phrase that made my chord right. *Miles didn't hear it as wrong, but instead as something that happened* (cited via Klemp et al., 2008, p. 10, added emphasis)

Innovation cannot emerge when something that has happened becomes “diagnosed” as an “error”—even if it technically was that. The only mistake that can be made in the ongoing construction of a melody is to stop the effort to keep moving ahead—based on the feeling that “this is wrong”. The crucial mistake is to stop at “this is mistake” and become debilitated in the expectation of negative (even if deserved) negative evaluation—by Self or an Other. Such stoppage and dependence on evaluation is standard practice in school education—and it grants the impossibility of creative solutions in educational practices. School practices work against creativity.

Fortunately making music is dependent on the flow of the musician’s affect in irreversible time. In the flow of ongoing action like playing music, singing, or being on the course of downhill or slalom skiing such meaning marker is detrimental to the completion of the action—and hence some form of improvisation necessarily emerges in the action process—moving to the designated end state. The tension between **WHAT NOW** <> **WHAT NEXT** that guides the ongoing action can be transferred to the post-factum tension **WHAT WAS** (“this was wrong!”) <> **WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN** (“the right way is X”). This reflection entails treatment of what happened in terms of fixed categories (“right” <> “wrong”)—and is the inevitable end of any form of creativity. Thus—to exclaim “this is creative!” eliminates the actual creativity involved in whatever “this” is. The fascination that leads to such exclamation may be honest—but the outcome of which is counterproductive to the original exclamation. This leads to an interesting methodological problem for the domain of creativity research—narratives about creativity in existing methods cannot in principle represent the phenomena that they are supposed to make clearer for us. In fact these methods accomplish precisely the opposite—further obscure our understanding of creativity.

Is this a new idea? That using verbal terms and their extensions into narratives would block—rather than enhance—access to psychological phenomena? I have done here nothing new but re-iterate William James’ (1890) note on “psychologists’ fallacy”—the belief that the psychological phenomena and our talking about these phenomena, are the same. They are not—and cannot be—given the functions of human sign-making to distance the Self from the immediate experience.

In the flow of ongoing action there is no luxury of evaluation “this is a mistake” but only the need to move on further—“whatever happened, now I make the next step”. The primary creative act is embedded in the general principle *trying, and trying further* (a version of James Mark Baldwin’s notion of “trying, and trying again”). The traditional focus of learning researchers on “trial and error” does not fit the ongoing living in irreversible time. There are no “errors” in the flow of irreversible living on—only new modifications beyond what happened. Creativity thus becomes flexibility of creating trajectories towards the imagined end state of the given action.

Conclusion: Creativity Requires Disorganization in Order to Arrive at New Organization

If viewed as a developmental process, any form of innovation we might label “creativity” entails the process of initial disorganization of the previous form into an intermediate Gestalt—or a de-differentiated state—after which new relations between parts in the new whole become synthesized. This makes the process of music making particularly open to innovation—as the task demands of the flow of meaningful sound creation constrains the range of new paths the music might take. The new is built on the old—not the old as it was, but as it happened to be performed. The macro-social constraining of the process takes place in the move from myths to rites (Guimarães, 2020, p. 117) where the rites assist in the disorganization of the current system of feelings and thoughts. The act of creating a musical expression is precisely that kind of a move from myth in the mind that becomes—through the uncertainty of being translated into sounds—a poetic new construction of the feeling. Performing music is a rite that carries the myth forward in its continuity across generation. Hence the ending chords of the particular music piece are crucial for striving for innovation. But these end symbols are themselves our projections of meaningful course of action into the future, and rely on the imagination processes of the music maker’s soul.

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8

Deepening the Dimensions of Dialogism: Conceptual Linkages

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I

“Where there is monologism, there is no creativity.” This central claim from the introduction, with which I am in full accord, links the three wide-ranging chapters (2, 3, 6) toward which my remarks are directed. The authors present and utilize a wide range of conceptual tools to establish the counterthesis and its range of import: creativity is an essentially dialogical phenomenon. Creativity, the authors hold, arises within and is continually nurtured by reciprocating processes of social and materio-cultural interactions of various sorts. These interactions take place in contexts of different scales, ranging from the familial and domestic to the wide and complex forms of educational, political, technological, and economic organizations. Looked at from the point of view of the open and

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conceptually broad-based cultural psychology represented by the authors, these are contexts of meaning-seeking and meaning-making that make up the semiosphere or open ambient of human beings as distinctively symbolic animals (von Uexküll, 2010, Lotman, 1990, Langer 1982, 1974, 1967). We ‘realize’ ourselves by developing our symbolic, affective, and practical powers of coping with, and accomodating ourselves to, the flux of individual and social experience and the massive rhythmic dynamics of nature. In this chapter the theoretical and conceptual, as well as aesthetic, themes of these preceding chapters, grounded in a wide range of supporting sources, are engaged and complemented by judicious advertence to further exemplifications, as well as implications, of creativity on individual, social-institutional, and political levels.

The examination of the conceptual space of dialogism in the course of these chapters puts into play a wide variety of associated concepts. Dialogism is linked first and foremost to the concept of ‘alterity’ or ‘otherness.’ Dialogue in the human case of language, with its dual aspects of articulation/representation and communication, implies a difference of voices and their associated ‘I-positions,’ a notion taken from the dialogical self theory developed by Hubert Hermans (2022), and others. These ‘I-positions’ are anchored in the affective fields of associated body subjects seeking and creating meanings in the differently toned multiple realities in which they carry on their lives and carry out their existential projects (Innis, 2020).

These projects involve intrinsically linked processes of material exchanges with nature and semiotic, or symbolic, exchanges with one another (Kapp, 1877, Cassirer, 1930, Innis, 2002, ch. 6). The human development of tools and machines out of the resourceful otherness of nature in what Kapp called ‘organ-projection’ is rooted in the individual and social linking of hand, eye, and language, itself a kind of dialogue. The further formal symbol systems that now give us the contemporary world of hypermediated communication and economic systems are grounded in, and monitored by, abstract technologies, many of which are so designed to be in dialogue with one another to pursue specific ends. While these technological systems are ultimately due to our creative powers, involving extensive collaboration and interchange, we in no way stand outside of them such that we can oversee or foresee the outcomes

or consequences of their internal logics. We have no way to ensure that these forms of high symbolic creativity will be benign or lead to what Neves-Pereira and Pinheiro in their introduction call “a culture of care and responsiveness” that ideally should mark systems of democracy rooted in a “cultural-intersubjective process that can be expanded from the dialogical grammar of creativity.” Some of the orders that emerge from following such a grammar can in the end lead to frightful, indeed deadly, consequences.

Cultural-intersubjective processes of mediation and interaction both generate and are dependent upon the semiosphere that makes up the human open ambient and its dependence on forms of abstraction, ranging from deliberate as well as spontaneous construction of images through natural languages to the development of mathematical and other formal systems, a theme pursued with rich empirical detail in Langer. The authors creatively follow Bakhtin’s lead of foregrounding language and the generation and reception/interpretation of verbal forms of art as the fundamental matrices of the dance of contending and supporting voices that make up the polyphonic semiotic structures of culture and its dialectic of forms. The voice of the author, as paradigmatic ‘speaker,’ is embedded in a tradition of antecedent, contemporary, and future voices. The voices embodied in the work of verbal art engage, oppose, anticipate, provoke, and elicit ‘counter-voices,’ not necessarily to contradict or deny but also to praise, continue, or extend and transform, a theme investigated with nuance and feeling with respect to poetry in Stewart (2011). Indeed, in the hermeneutical encounter with the literary work or a work of art, no matter its scale or medium, we see what Hans-Georg Gadamer (1960), cited by the authors in Chap. 3, called a ‘fusion of horizons.’ Such a fusion engenders in the interlocutors those novel ‘proper significate effects’ that C. S. Peirce called ‘interpretants,’ changes in consciousness and its tones. These changes encompass the spiraling and self-constructing spheres of affect, action/reaction, and thought as a synthetic time-binding multileveled process. Such time-binding and its progressive sedimentation in the memory-laden bottomless lake of consciousness make up the affective tones of our individual and shared lives. Creative processes occur at different levels in this lake.

II

In the last sentence of their introduction Neves-Pereira and Pinheiro state that they deliberately do not emphasize the uses and functions of creative processes “as adjektivization of cultural products and outcomes,” that is, they are not interested in defining ‘novel’ or ‘creative’ as criterial marks of a significant objective achievement, such as a work of art or a new scientific theory. ‘Novel’ and ‘creative,’ however, are clearly contrast terms over against ordinary and commonplace. They mark a significant difference in a cultural product considered as a kind of ‘utterance’—no matter what the medium—with its defining semiotic features that set it off from others. Picasso’s *Guernica* is not a surface of random graffiti.

‘Novel’ and ‘creative’ are, however, open-textured value terms. Wisely or not, the authors make no attempt to define in strict terms just what their ranges of application are. Nevertheless, they justifiably ascribe to Bakhtin’s work a remarkable, if not unique, importance for cultural psychology’s exploration of the implications and range of the dialogical grammar of creativity and its energizing power as a social norm or standard.

The authors are right to see that Bakhtin’s work, with its grounding in literary studies and the philosophy of language, offers cultural psychology, as well as philosophical semiotics and the philosophy of culture, a fresh and heuristically fertile semiotic model of creative linguistic and cultural interactions. Literature in its creation and in its content both exemplifies and emerges from a dialogue of multiple voices with their felt individual rhythmic tensions and patterns. Moreover, no matter how planned, literary works, and art works in general, are not under the complete or conscious control of the author. The author, and indeed any speaker in an ongoing dialogical situation or an artist confronted with expressive materials of varied sorts, is often surprised and led by their own spontaneous articulation. The striving for the right word with a distinctive felt tone in a dialogue or the right stroke in a painting can elicit forms of articulation or responsive gestural actions with the right touch that surprise the speakers or the artist. They are not as slips of the tongue or obvious misnamings or accidental inattentive and inappropriate

movements of the brush, but as configurations of sense that appear to be self-assembling in the different dialogues between persons or between painters and their surfaces, palettes, and brushes. Dialogism, in Bakhtin's sense, foregrounds quite generally not just the voice of the explicit other to which one is responding but also the voices that lie sedimented in the 'funded' structures of one's life. In processes of articulation, these funded voices, which do not belong to any particular language or even to language as such, come forth as constituent forces of novel utterances or meaningful expressions.

The German poet Goethe once remarked that "the greatest genius is not worth much if he pretends to draw exclusively from his own resources" and "that every one of my writings has been furnished to me by a thousand different persons, a thousand different things" (cited in Richardson, 13). Indeed, in another place, he contended that "closely scrutinized, the productions of [artistic genius] are for the most part reminiscences" (cited in Casey, 2000, p. 301, from Mann, 1948, p. 640). The problematic nature of these relations is clearly not a unique concern for the domain of art, where we have been taught to expect art works to be marked by degrees of novelty, originality, and inspiration and not be mere repetitions, copies, or superficial blends of prior achievements. It is a concern for all forms of creative work—theoretical, productive, agential, and so forth—all of which have unique circumstances for their realization of some degree of originality, the demand for which Emerson in his essay on Shakespeare called "petulant," asserting that "all originality is relative. Every thinker is retrospective." Such retrospection, which does not have to happen in systematic ways, involves retrieval, extension, and transformation that both push and lure one toward one's own voice (Stewart, 2011).

Goethe (1998, p. 792) further wrote that "the most attractive mark of originality is knowing how to develop a received idea so creatively that no one can easily guess how much lies hidden within it"—or, one might add, easily grasp the grounded complexity and not self-evident novelty of the work. Scientific originality or creativity is similar to this but not identical. It is measured against different conceptual backgrounds of competing or merely postulated theories and unexplained phenomena that cannot be situated within existing frameworks or even pinned down for technical experimental reasons. Rosamund Harding, in her *An Anatomy*

of *Inspiration*, provocatively proposed that “while the scientist creates a discovery the artist discovers a creation” (p. 57). And the cultural psychologist finds new pathways to theoretical analysis with engaged practical intent as Branco proposes in her joining of practices of education with the practices of democracy and Pinheiro and Simão with their illustration of the existential import of the confinement diaries.

If, as Emerson remarks elsewhere in his essay on Shakespeare, “the greatest genius is the most indebted man,” this places a heavy burden on creators as well as a responsive burden on those who undergo or encounter in multiple ways their products. The interpreter of such works, or social and cultural formations, must avoid engaging them with mere nodding recognition or by imposing a template of prior experiences and the habits of attending that have come to inform us. Each art work or cultural product, or novel theory, makes a claim on our attention as a unique instance of a kind of thing with its distinctive defining qualities in the case of art works and conceptual content in the case of a theory. But they arise against the background and with the support of previous works and received ideas and theories. The nature of this background goes beyond art and theory construction to the whole domain of ‘creative making and thinking’ quite generally. It is the cultivation and experiencing of this creative making and thinking that enlivens and informs the interaction between selves with their individual I-positions and affective fields that give a distinctive tone to their lives.

III

Going further, I would like to propose that the focus of the authors on creativity as a process could be significantly enriched, but not devalued, by a closer examination and description of the substrata of activities, themselves processes, that constitute it. The creative process is a moving dynamic locus of the emergence of novelties, or the crossing of thresholds, that reorganize, even if just for oneself, not just one’s cognitive field. It augments one’s felt sense of discovery, with its resultant reconfiguration of one’s affective field as the domain of existential confidence, which

clearly education in all its forms, as well as political participation, is meant to foster.

Interestingly enough, such a concern was an essential part of the work of the American pragmatist John Dewey. However, rather than engaging this link directly by utilizing his works on education, social psychology, and politics, I will instead indicate another aspect of Dewey's work that deepens the diverse characterizations of our understanding of the complex generative processes and conditions for creativity outlined in these chapters. In doing so I will also indicate how the theme of adjectivization of the results of creativity can also be brought more formally into connection with creativity's process dimension.

Consider this phenomenologically 'thick' passage from Dewey's masterpiece, *Art as Experience* (1934, p. 76).

New ideas come leisurely yet promptly to consciousness only when work has previously been done in forming the right doors by which they may gain entrance. Subconscious maturation precedes creative production in every line of human endeavor. The direct effort of "wit and will" of itself never gave birth to anything that is not mechanical; their function is necessary, but it is to let loose allies that exist outside their scope. At different times we brood over different things; we entertain purposes that, as far as consciousness is concerned, are independent, being each appropriate to its own occasion; we perform different acts, each with its own particular result. Yet as they all proceed from one living creature they are somehow bound together below the level of intention. They work together, and finally something is born almost in spite of conscious personality, and certainly not because of its deliberate will. When patience has done its perfect work, the man is taken possession of by the appropriate muse and speaks and sings as some god dictates. (p. 76)

Such a passage must not be restricted to canonical artistic or creative processes. It encompasses a description of how in dialogical situations of everydayness we find new and right words pulled out of us that fit the previously unarticulated 'thing-meant' that we are striving for in order to correspond to the demands of the situation. The educational/pedagogical task is to recognize the ground that has to be prepared and cultivated even for the process of waiting for the felt insight to occur.

A second text from *Art as Experience* (1934, p. 287) moves us to the deep level of creative non-practice, another element in the dialogical grammar of creativity that is exemplified in art or in theoretical discovery, but by no means restricted to it. Dewey writes:

I do not think it can be denied that an element of reverie, of approach to a state of dream, enters into the creation of a work of art, nor that the experience of the work when it is intense often throws one into a similar state. Indeed, it is safe to say that “creative” conceptions in philosophy and science come only to persons who are relaxed to the point of reverie. The subconscious fund of meanings stored in our attitudes have no chance of release when we are practically or intellectually strained. For much the greater part of this store is then restrained, because the demands of a particular problem and particular purpose inhibit all except the elements directly relevant. Images and ideas come to us not by set purpose but in flashes, and flashes are intense and illuminating, they set us on fire, only when we are free from special preoccupations. (p. 287)

This is a state cognate to what C. S. Peirce, a key source for Jaan Valsiner’s and others’ development of a cultural psychology of semiotic dynamics, called ‘musement.’ A dialogue in which one is engaged calls us out and leads us in different directions in this ‘play’ of musement that leads to unexpected discoveries about the generative linkages of categories and not just those of a metaphysical nature. Dialogue itself is not just an enabling condition of the play of musement but a paradigmatic instance of it.

I would like to cite a third Dewey passage bearing upon the scope of the role of alterity in the dialogical grammar of creativity. It generalizes, essential aspects of the material dimensions of this grammar and the interactions, indeed, dynamic fusion, of inner and outer in creative processes, cognate to Merleau-Ponty’s reflections on painting and the ‘flesh’ that Pinheiro and Simão discuss (see Innis 2022). Dewey writes (1934, pp. 77–78):

With respect to the physical materials that enter into the formation of a work of art, every one knows that they must undergo change. Marble must be chipped; pigments must be laid on canvas; words must be put together.

It is not so generally recognized that a similar transformation takes place on the side of “inner” materials, images, observations, memories and emotions. They are also progressively re-formed; they, too, must be administered. This modification is the building up of a truly expressive act. The impulsion that seethes as a commotion demanding utterance must undergo as much and as careful management in order to receive eloquent manifestation as marble or pigment, as colors and sounds. Nor are there in fact two operations, one performed upon the outer material and the other upon the inner and mental stuff. The work is artistic in the degree in which the two functions of transformation are effected by a single operation. As the painter places pigment upon the canvas, or imagines it placed there, his ideas and feeling are also ordered. As the writer composes in his medium of words what he wants to say, his idea takes on for himself perceptible form.

In this process of interactions with materials in the development of an expressive form or utterance, Dewey holds that the self is modified “beyond acquisition of greater facility and skill.” Interaction is a process of sedimentation, resulting in a “deposit of meaning,” involving formation of habits, attitudes, and interests. Dewey, as I have noted, calls this condition ‘fundedness,’ a kind of experiential ‘capital’ that is constitutive of the self and supports the self’s multiple dimensions of noting and caring for things and setting life purposes. Dewey considers this fundedness of experience to be the key to mind as “the background upon which every new contact with surroundings is projected.” At the same time this background is not a passive screen. Experience is a dynamic spiral of “assimilation and reconstruction of both background and of what is taken in and digested,” a central point developed in his classical 1896 essay on the reflex arc concept in psychology. The multi-dimensional experiential field is a range of ‘material’ resistances and affordances, of oppositional tensions, that stimulate the imagination, functioning as enabling conditions for arriving at novel satisfactory consummations, whether affective, practical, aesthetic, political, educational, theoretical, and so forth (Bardt, 2019, pp. 64–65). Mind, in Dewey’s conception, is an “active and eager background” that “lies in wait and engages whatever comes its way so as to absorb it into its own being. Mind as background is formed out of modifications of the self that have occurred in the process of prior

interactions with environment. Its animus is toward further interactions” (1931a, pp. 275–276).

Creativity is the mark of continuing processes of ‘making things new’ as well of ‘making new things.’ The analytical category of alterity prevents one from ignoring the indispensable role materials play in determining not just objects and artefacts but the dense life contexts in which material processes of making occur. As the authors of these chapters have clearly shown and used as their heuristic focus, language as a semiotic system likewise is in a true sense *material* rooted in socio-material processes (Vološinov 1929/1986).

IV

Further confirming light on the complex issue of linking creative process to creative product is found in the work of the cultural anthropologist, Tim Ingold. The study of visual culture, he wrote, has overwhelmingly focused on relations between objects, images, and their interpretation, analogous to focusing on completed linguistic utterances and their relations to their meanings and their variety of interpretations in the study of the language arts. The study of material culture, with its complexes of material artefacts has followed, in some traditions, a parallel path. Ingold (2013) writes: “What is lost, in both fields of study, is the creativity of the productive processes that bring the artefacts themselves into being: on the one hand in the generative currents of the materials of which they are made; on the other in the sensory awareness of practitioners. Thus processes of making appear swallowed up in objects made; processes of seeing in images seen” (p. 7). What is needed, as the chapters in this book show, is detailed analysis of the reciprocal centrality of process and product in the analysis of creativity.

Ingold (2013) writes of an improvisatory creativity “that works things out as it goes along” in contrast to “the attribution of creativity to the novelty of determinate ends conceived in advance” (p. 20). Certainly language mediated dialogues exhibit such an improvisatory character even in the domain of inner speech, in the flow of word and counterword and the felt traces of contrary tendencies in the field of consciousness that

Vygotsky had been concerned with. Clearly, there are times when the ends are determinate by reason of a foreseen interaction of materials and times when the end is attained when one recognizes that a process of interaction has come to a conclusion that ‘feels right’ or ‘corresponds’ to a sense of completion, such as finding the right word to dissolve what seems a radical disagreement or how to create a sense of comity as social bond.

Ingold argues, and shows with a wealth of examples, that ‘making’ in the sense in which he using this term must be understood “longitudinally, as a confluence of forces and materials ... a form-generating” or “morphogenetic process” (p. 22). Ingold thinks of both organisms and artefacts in dynamic terms as growing, as matrices of processes. What an organism ‘has in mind’ is, to be sure, quite different from the varying degrees of human involvement in the making of an artefact. Ingold makes an indispensable point when he writes, “even if the maker has a form in mind, it is not this form that creates the work. It is the engagement with materials” (p. 22). Is this not so in the case of speech and its essentially dialogical structure? Language, too, involves active transformation of material that supports and mediates the utterance that is appropriate and fitting to the dialogical situations in which we find ourselves, whether writer, artist, architect, or teacher, or working mother in the different contexts in which we engage one another.

For Ingold, “learning is understanding in practice: exploring the interrelations between perception, creativity and skill” (p. 9). With respect to the approaches represented in diverse ways by Neves-Pereira, Pinheiro, and Simão, we can see that this triad applies to the dialogical grammar of creativity: dialogical creativity itself involves perception and skill. Could we not ask if the fostering of creativity is dependent on developing frameworks for various practices—educational, political, communal, and so forth—that aim principally at the development of perception and skill and not explicitly or directly at creativity? The perceived ongoing possibilities of materials in the broadest sense and of dialogical encounters with them in diverse situations, both singularly and in groups, provoke self-reflection on their successes and on the interruptions and lack of focus attendant on their failure. Such skills involve what Polanyi (1958, 1966) called tacit knowledge and entail a subsidiary, not focal,

knowledge of the maxims that inform our activities and how we manage to 'go on' in them.

Ingold (2013) refers to what he called "creativity of 'messy practices' that give rise to real buildings" (p. 59), a theme treated with concrete nuance by Juhani Pallasmaa in *The Thinking Hand* (2009, Innis 2019). Messy practices mark the whole realm of dialogical interactions which have not a stable but a dynamic, and often, unstable center and field of forces. Messy practices involve starting and stopping, interruptions, extended pauses, diversions, attempts at domination and control, and so forth. Indeed texts, ordered conversation, works of art, democracy and the institutions and practices of schooling, emerge out of and are examples of such messy practices. These practices are always confronted by what Polanyi in another context referred to as a 'logical gap' between where one is situated and where one is heading to, although one cannot get a firm grip on it before crossing the gap. In such situations, which mark life itself, crossing the gap is not principally a feat of operative action but an *event* into which we are caught up and to which we can, indeed must, accommodate ourselves.

V

Kyna Leski (2020) characterized this process as being caught up in a storm and presents it a heuristic image or model for uncovering the dialogical grammar of creativity. It has important psychological relevance on both the individual and social levels. Our authors have shown these levels to be mixed in various ways. Leski thinks of the storm of creativity as a vortex spontaneously self-assembling out of its dynamic elements and forces which exist in various fields of attraction. The storm is disruptive of the false 'fair weather' of obviousness with its putative luminous transparency or taken-for-grantedness of things. The storm is encountered as and in what John Dewey (1930, 1931a, 1931b) called 'problematic situations,' the vital contexts of life and thought that engender a felt perplexity about how to engage them. Creativity as a process or goal, following Leski, is engendered by senses of disturbances or disruptions in experience that can lead to gathering and discarding of materials and thoughts

that end, when the storm has cleared, with something analogous to “coming on a clearing” (p.xxi)—like a meadow or ground that is luminously stirring and unsettled, having the generative power of inducing an insight or solving of a ‘problem,’ in the broadest sense of that term. Looking at creativity as a process of “opening” onto a clearing raises the question of how to maintain or cultivate the “generative softground” of the meadow, which, with neglect, can turn into an arid desert or a field strangled by weeds, in need of rain and wind of a new storm to bring it back to life. This is itself a creative image of creativity.

Leski’s (2020) image-based analysis holds in tension the two analytical categories or dimension of creativity. Creativity is clearly, as Pinheiro, Neves-Pereira, Simão, and Branco have richly shown, a *process* involving our being caught up in dynamic fields of forces. Looked at semiotically, as cultural psychologists do, it is activity undertaken in already formed cultural materially embodied meaning-fields. Looked at technically, such fields of forces *afford* possible transformations of materials and media, a characterization that applies paradigmatically to the arts. Looked at practically, it is a field of possible and appropriate social actions, including the dual political and educational value contexts that our authors have engaged in different ways.

But creativity, we have seen, is also an *event* that seems to bring from nowhere. Some have described this ‘nowhere’ as the unconscious—or, as we saw, in Dewey’s case—the subconscious, perhaps a more neutral term. Creativity as an event cannot be willed or controlled although there are certain practices of various sorts that facilitate it. It cannot be constructed like a house or a wall from a plan worked out in detail beforehand. Leski (2020) offers a schema of these practices as does Rosamund Harding (1967) in her *An Anatomy of Inspiration*. For Leski, “the creative process comes from displacing, disturbing, and destabilizing what you (think you) know” (p. 13). These preconceptions, which we can perhaps think of more generally as ‘forestructures,’ paradoxically both foster and “hinder creativity” (p. 13).

Preconceptions are not just in our head. They are also habits of feeling, tendencies to act, the “stubborn or temperamental material” that we cannot leave behind and that are clung to by means of those practices that make up what Peirce called, in his “The Fixation of Belief,” the method of

tenacity (Peirce, 1877). Forgetting is difficult, Leski (2020) points out, citing Ortega y Gasset to the effect that the culture in which we have been formed can become the guarantor of a “deceptive safety,” burdened with “parasitic and lymphatic matter” (p. 19). Creativity, or creative action, is marked by the “effort to try and see ahead” (p. xxii) while being deeply conditioned by the past and its traditional methods and concepts which are both exploited and overcome.

Leski (2020) remarks that creativity demands, or is shown to be demanded by, a kind of bewilderment in which new notions arise and are used as rafts “built out of the flotsam sea of the unknown” (p. 20). When we confront the unknown, in whatever dimensions of our lives that happens to be, this flotsam sea is actually filled with materials for possible rafts that can carry us further, in dialogue with one another, to new shores and new harbors.

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