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PORTUGUESA

EMBODIED CREATIVITY – SEARCHING FOR THE *DANCING-SELF*

Dissertation submitted to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to obtain a
Master's Degree in
Culture Studies: Performance and Creativity

By

KAROLIN SPOHR

Faculty of Human Sciences

APRIL 2020



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Abstract

Based on the inquiries into the genealogies of creativity as a concept in both *Western* and *Eastern* traditions, and tracing the literature around creativity as an object of research in Creativity Studies, this dissertation tries to situate creativity within the realm of dance improvisation and looks at how the application and understanding of creativity are closely connected to the cultural factors surrounding them. Acknowledging creativity as a universal and culturally related phenomenon which can be accessed by individuals through both conscious practices and open-mindedness, and seeing dance performance as a manifestation of creativity, this research asks, first, what is creativity in performing practice and, second, is there a dancing-self in the performer. It will apply the study of creativity onto the personal level and into the context of dance.

To answer these corresponding research questions, this study will be divided into two parts. The first part is a theoretical study of the literature of creativity from traditional *Western* and *Eastern* viewpoints of the creative person to recent cultural and psychological research approaches about creativity in performance. The second part is a practical study aligned with the results deduced from the theoretical overview in the first part. It is a Case Study of three professional dancers of Contemporary Dance working at the State Theatre in Bremen. Through studying the recordings of their improvised movements with them, using the methods of video-stimulated-recall and semi-open interviews, a qualitative study will be conducted to understand how creativity emerges with relevance to the theoretical findings as well as the idea of the *dancing-self*.

Keywords – Dancing-Self, Creativity, Taoism, Dance-Creativity, Contemporary Dance, *Eastern* Creativity.

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1 Introduction

Creativity is a term and a concept that has gained vast popularity in the last 20 years growing away from its origins in art and academia into multiple domains. One of the most significant translations was in the economic sector (Florida 2012). Coming a long way from the cultural and social development and transformation, the contemporary adaption of creativity into the field of production and economy strongly influences the understanding and expression of creativity in general (Pope 2005).

1.1 Background and Problem Statement

Being mainly investigated from a *Western* point of view in academia and other domains, creativity experiences a very process-orientated and expected understanding. It is perceived as a linear development resulting in a creative product. This product is the visible outcome which enables the environment to evaluate creativity and rank it. This creative product marks the degree and quality of creativity itself and is perceived as more socially significant than the whole body of thought, the process over time and the influential factors, which contributed to the final product (Briksman 2009). Generally speaking, creativity carries such a positive connotation to the extent that it is understood to be carried on in the cultural stock of knowledge and practices such as morality. This can be seen as one of the reasons for its contemporary popularity. Besides the economic sector being named as one of the consumers of creativity, the academic similarly developed more interest in the topic over time (Sternberg 1999). As Florida (2012) describes, creativity is a limitless resource in times of transformation in nature and social cultures. Or, as he puts it, the green solution against contemporary changes of climate and resource scarcity. This understanding of creativity and its popularity over-shadows the human occurrence of creativity itself. Pope (2005) critically writes from the perspective of a linguist, that the idea and concept of innovation is slowly being replaced with the word creativity and, thus, what is innovative is mistaken to be creative. Yet, innovation is one of the significant characteristics to be fulfilled if something is to be labelled as creative by academia. What does not meet the complexity and dynamic

of the topic in itself? Further than just the judgement of creativity in its product, the product itself also needs to fulfil the service of being as efficient as possible for its society that it is produced for or in.

In academia, this is described as creativity just being visible within products, which are additionally also useful for others other than just to the creative person him- or herself*¹. Briksman (2009, 33) defines that “[a] creative scientific or inherent artistic product constitutes or incorporates a novel solution to a problem, inherent in a background of prior products, but not soluble based on these prior products themselves [...]”.

1.2 State of the Arts

With a former history, creativity studies appeared for the first time as it’s own domain in the 1950s. Initially, the study of creativity was mainly undertaken from a psychological and a philosophical perspective though creativity research experienced various changes in the decades following. Yet, its origin in the academic domain of psychology still strongly shapes the contemporary understanding of it. However, the occurrence of diverse understandings and investigations of the topic of creativity, the attempt of creativity being the cure for a problem-situation remains up to today (Sternberg 1999). This very fitfully meets the niche of product invention. “Creativity is an ability to respond adaptively to the needs of the approaches and new products. The ‘something new’ is usually a product processioned by a person [...]“ (Barron 1988, 80). Creativity is very tightly enclosed in our contemporary understanding of productiveness, since the product measures the value of the process in its whole body.

Almost contrasting this broadly understanding of creativity Briksman (2009) describes creativity as *being human*. The history of creativity is way older than the study of it or its concept (Sternberg 1999). From the 1960s onward, different disciplines investigated creativity, not from the observer perspective but form the individual feeling of it. Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi (2014) brought a strong point into the debate by introducing the concept

1. This work will make use of the German politic of using a ‘*’ when references are drawn to a specific gender, to express the presence and awareness that gender is not binary divided in *male* or *female*. The star ‘*’ here indicates all gender and identities existing since creativity is basically human.

of *the experience of flow*. They showed that creativity is not just to be measured or to be investigated by the means of a product but also by one's individual experience of it.

Notwithstanding, its high adaptation in diverse fields, the research into creativity has a very recent history in the field of psychology. Appearing for the first time in the 1950s, less than 0,2 of Research Papers concentrated on the field of Creativity Studies. In the 1990s, the topic of creativity experienced significant interest in the academic sector. For a long time the content of the emerging Creativity Studies circulated under the title of 'Psychology and Arts' (Sternberg 1999). This could be a consequence of the changing understanding of creativity provoked by the factors named above. Regarding the young history of this field of research, the approaches and research results still change frequently and dynamically and cause manifold approaches but not yet compromised assumptions.

The idea or image of creativity started travelling to other social sectors other than the arts, even if not yet holding an agreed body of content. Creativity turned into a travelling concept², without a body. The image circulating in popular culture of Creativity as a process of economic production became dominating. It is noteworthy to add that even in the research of Creativity Studies the spirit of the free market economy influences the object of research. A study by Wehner, Csikszentmihalyi, and Magyari-Beck (1991) demonstrated, that the object of research is usually an individual or the creative product, but rarely creativity in itself. The lack of sensitivity surrounding the undefined phenomena creativity changes the original understanding and practice and pushes it into a commercialised costume.

1.3 Relevance of the Presented Topic and Key Problem

Nowadays new 'creative' domains have opened up and creativity is a word that is used without a body of content to express productivity and potential use of the invention. The intrinsic human ability to create, the feeling and the cure in the practice of creativity, is what drives this work. It concentrates on the smallest and the same time biggest entity of

2. 'Travelling Concept' describes an academic term used for a tool in interdisciplinary research. Certain bounded information contained in a word is turned into a concept by attaching theories and understanding to it to describe complex phenomena. When these are adapted into another academic domain than they emerged in it is called a 'Travelling Concept' (Neumann and Tygstrup 2009).

creativity: its intrinsic energetic force. Many attempts that have been made to understand the phenomenon of creativity cannot fully grasp the concept, since the tools used do not meet the needs of the topic itself (Montuori 2003). This work investigates different understandings with a focus on *Eastern* attempts, traditions and ways of expression rather than a *White-Western* one to attempt to capture a glimpse of its essence. The work tries to differentiate between the concept and the phenomenon and find it new by taking a different perspective. Many of the described attempts towards creativity can be a way for the expression of it and the same time a way to understand, investigate and approach it as e.g. it happens in Chapter 3 in the Section 3.3. “Taoism and Creativity”. This work followed its belief in the aspects of the nature of creativity and what fosters it in its practice and how the whole research process was performed. As stated in the following Chapter 2 “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies“one alternative can be a very personal and intimate insight into one’s creativity and can grow from there to vaster and more general statements (Gruber and Wallace 1999).

1.4 Guiding Research Question

Discovering the domain of dance in the context of the Study of Creativity, this work finds the term of the *dancing-self*. In many pieces of work on the topic of creativity, in the academic context but also in other artistic domains, the reference is drawn to *something* that allows or makes people create. In the context of dance, Press and Warburton (2007) call it the *dancing-self*. These terms are what this work tries to bring to forth. It raises as the main question:

1. What is creativity in performing practice?
2. Is there a *dancing-self*?

1.4.1 The Personal Involvement: Breaking Creativity Down to a Personal Level in the Context of Dance

My view of the topic of creativity had already been shaped by my own experiences as a dancer. Therefore, instead of trying to take a completely objective standpoint of the topic, this work

will acknowledge my personal experiences. The theoretical framework is an attempt to find proof in alternative academic studies for the feeling of when we create, that I have come to know from my own experience. Following Gruber and Wallace (1999) the methodological attempt towards investigating creativity will follow the framework of a Case Study, which allow space for personal knowledge and and actual artistic understanding of the creative domain.

1.5 Structure of the Academic Work

The work is divided into two main parts:

1. A theoretical approach into the question of: What is creativity in performing practice?
2. The practical field study to align the theoretical attempts.

The research questions are raised in two contexts: firstly, in a general one trying to finding answers in existing theoretical works and secondly in the context of dance to answer from an individual, personal, very physical and practical point of view.

As introduction and differentiation of the concept of creativity and the phenomenon itself a look is taken into the historical origin within academia with a focus on *Western* developments in Chapter 2 “The beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* societies” . In Chapter 3 “Culturally diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity” the work widens the view of the importance of alternate perspectives into creativity with a focus on *Eastern* practices, also with the cultural aspects taking influence, emphasising relevant perspectives and practices, meeting the main research question. Chapter 4 “From Theory to Practice, Self-Actualisation and the Phenomenon of Creativity in the Context of the Medium Dance” discusses the findings and results of the deep dive through the history. Here, diverse practices and understandings are applied to creativity in the context of dance and *dance creativity*. In consequence, Chapter 5 “Methodology – Presenting the Case Study” and Chapter 6 “Analysis of the Results – The Case Study and the Qualitative Interviews”, treat and describe the practical part of the work, where a Case Study was executed. The Case Study is divided into two parts: firstly, a practical part by an improvisation performance and secondly, a

connected interview, supported by the video-stimulated recall method. This was executed with professional dancers of the domain of contemporary dance in Bremen working at the State Theatre in Bremen.

Taking the results of the practical investigation of creativity as a phenomenon in the context of dance improvisation Chapter 6 “Analysis of the Results – The Case Study and the Qualitative Interview” takes the findings into account. It is compared how the results of the undertaken Case Study fit into the theoretical construct resulted from the literary research of the current state of the arts. The Conclusion given in Chapter 7 offers a summary of the theoretical and practical results and connects these in the holistic nature of the topic of creativity. It is given a reflection on the research process and an outlook on the topic specifically, here, in this given context of dance.

2 The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies

As with all linguistic terms, the word ‘creativity’ carries attached meanings that a group or society have agreed upon in order to communicate and understand one another. In the case of our topic of research - creativity - the attached meaning goes beyond attached mental images³. Creativity is an abstract phenomenon, which is not visible and haptic such as a tree or a car. A term like creativity is an invented word, which represents a human experience put in a form, which was developed over time and bounded to social developments in groups and societies. The word creativity refers to a concept which can be understood from a linguistic perspective as a unit of language. This unit contains the named above collective images, attached emotions and sensations that the community agreed upon (Pesina 2015). Like any other cultural trait, concepts change and develop over time. Therefore, any attempt at defining the concept of creativity requires insight into the history, the development of creativity as a concept, and the research of creativity in science.

2.1 The Beginnings: Origins in Religion, Philosophy, and Masculinity

Before reviewing the history of creativity it is important to be aware that societies and culture did not use it as a phenomenon of its own. For most of the time of human history, the concept did not exist itself but was represented in other activities or events. Around the beginning and mid 19th Century, the word and concept of creativity gained its own status in the social and cultural stock of knowledge in most *Western* societies, alongside other social and cultural changes caused by new economical inventions. The origins of the concept and

3. The term ‘Mental Images’ comes from an interdisciplinary field of the Study of Collective Memory. This approach suggests, that each culture and society remembers and reproduces knowledge and history with the help of collective images. These images can be also understood as stereotyped ideas or perceptions of social objects. Blondel explains it with the example of religious rites. He states that the ceremony of a rite can be seen as the image and the communication and interaction with others is the activity of it. It is needed to always perform an image through action to keep it alive (Olick 2011).

its understanding of creativity in *Western Societies* can today be seen in Plato's "Theory of Ideas". The theory of ideas or forms is grounded in the belief that all individuals perception is created within themselves. It means that all senses are used to form entities from the perceived information that Plato also calls 'ideals'. He differentiates between people who are aware of this phenomenon and people who are not: the unconscious. Also, humans always bind diverse information together into entities and groups visually as well as at an abstract level of the mind. From this point of view, we build patterns which can be decoded and read by a social group (Pelaez 1997). Plato believed that certain entities, though perceived through our senses, are eternal and fixed concepts. He believed that certain entities called *forms* override our sense-created perception and are set (Demos 1948). In accordance with the opening of this chapter, which took a linguistic perspective but a similar argument, it is a manifold approach. Alternatively, in the Greek, Judaic, Christian and Muslim tradition and belief, the source of giving inspiration lies outside of the individual and is given by "a higher power" (Ryhammar and Brolin 1999, 260).

2.2 Creativity Origins in Christian Belief, its Creator and the Concept of the *Genius*

In the Christian belief system, the narrative of the creation of the world is Genesis 1.1-3. In this story, creation happens from nothingness – *ex nihilo*. This belief and point of departure of the understanding of creativity still very strongly shapes our perception of it today, as shown in the following. In contrast to the creation from nothingness – *ex nihilo* – the belief of a higher power, which creates from nothing, Aristotle invented the concept of the plenum 'the fullness' (Pope 2005). In this belief, the act of creation brought from nothingness was always performed by someone or something. The act of bringing something into being was incarnated in the Roman time in the concept of the *genius* – 'genio' – a man of a certain higher social status was meant to carry a "guardian spirit" (Ryhammar and Brolin 1999, 260). It was a masculine concept applied to males, who were meant to have the ability to the heritage of the 'genio' – the spirit onto their sons. Yet, the understanding was not that the man was the creator himself but the creation was a "representation as possible of what a higher power

had created [...]” (260). Except for the action of giving birth, the capacity of the creative was narrated to be a masculine event. Connected to giving birth in the early *Western* view of creativity the main narrative⁴ of creativity was the biblical Genesis .

These early Christian beliefs played a significant role in the *Western* understanding of creativity up to today. This conception of creativity survived almost unmodified into the age of the Renaissance in the 15th and 17th Centuries (Sternberg 1999). Up to this point also the term linguistically did not experience too much development. The Latin word *creare* can be translated as meaning to produce or to make. The idea of the verb *to create* was mainly bound and expressed in the past tense: ‘creat’– ‘was created’ – linguistically a closed and non-accessible process. Around the 15th Century, the word can be found for the first time in the present tense (Pope 2005). It is topicalised and used in the context of the current art at that time. Here god and also the poet were described as creators (Williams 2015). It was argued as the ability “to imagine and make things beyond nature [...]” (45). However, the word was used in the religious way of transforming something into being. Generally, in the 16th and 17th Century creativity was still ascribed to just a few, who had the divine attitude, such as e.g. kings (Pope 2005), (Sternberg 1999).

2.3 Creativity Concept enters *Western Science: Discovering Giftedness*

Creativity as a concept is tightly bonded to the movement of researching the world. The word research appeared for the first time in 1639 (Sternberg 1999). With the upcoming of a new era of Renaissance – Engl. ‘rebirth’, creativity was extended in its understanding of inspiration to creation happening and being realised within the creative person mainly him- or herself* (“Translation of Renaissance – French–English Dictionary” 2019). Like many concepts in this epoch, this approach was a revival of the Roman view of the ‘genio’. The significant

4. Social Narratives are likely to the assumption of mental images which are anchored collectively in societies. There are ways how cultural, social phenomenon as creativity can be told. Yet, certain social or cultural objects are constantly kept in the social or cultural group, the understanding of it, the narrative of the object, can change or vary among different cultural or social groups synchronically, or diachronically over a period of time. Garro and Mattingly (2000, 1) describe it as a tool “of giving meaning to experience [...]”. It builds the bridge of internal perception and the physical active outer world. They carry the potential for individuals of a certain society to learn access and adapt to it.

difference to the antique understanding of creativity is the location of the inspirational source or energy. Shifting from the understanding of an outer point of input and inspiration, the creative being was now understood also as the source of this energy and inspiration – *genius* became independent and an own institution. The reason for this lies in the scientific and social developments in the second half of the Renaissance era. Here, the scientific movement grew and profession replaced serfdom. The scientific sector was established and evened the way for the enlightenment movement ⁵.

The historical context in which the enlightenment movement took place provided the perfect ingredients to enable a change of the culture of knowledge. The colonial streams brought new (art) objects of other cultures and the cultures themselves back into the countries and confronted *Western* societies with different world views (Burke 2012). New images of the perception of the world were invented and caused not just a transformation in the accessibility of knowledge but also offered space for changes in social and political structures. Yet the scientific movement was an intellectual movement exclusively for people from certain areas of society such as art or literature and still embodied by certain talented individuals the ‘genio’ (Sternberg 1999), (Pope 2005), (Ryhammar and Brodin 1999). The ‘genio’ by that time also claimed the knowledge and the investigation of the world for ‘himself’. In consequence, the idea of research entered the intellectual discourse, which accompanied the enlightenment approach. This aimed to bring light into the places where knowledge was lacking – field wise and socially. Hence, it influenced the understanding of the concept of creativity. Caused also by a change of the social function of the bible and religion, which shifted from being the leading institution to orientate society’s morality on, to be simply a literal piece. At the end of the 17th Century, the Royal Society ⁶ was founded. The fundamental goals of the association were to enhance scientific research through: diversifying scientists, embracing the new focus on individualism, and pursuing the importance of investigation of phenomena and the act of research. The Royal Society mainly focused on the Natural Sciences rather

5. The ‘Enlightenment Movement’ challenged the order of society and belief by arguing on the base of reason and logic. The movement began in 1650 was also provoked by the Royal Societies and the colonial movement by this time. It lasted until the 18th Century and still has a great impact on the image of the world in *Western* societies today. It brought science forward as one of the most vibrant knowledge creators of this era (Im Hof 1997).

6. The ‘Royal Society’ was founded in 1660 after the civil war, and aims to investigate and scale rather than assume and suggest knowledge about nature. Among other Sir Isaac Newton’s *Principal* was published by the Royal Society (Lyons 1944).

than Human Science. Nevertheless, the new approach of researching the world provoked also the research of creativity.

The new spirit and belief in the natural law in the 18th Century caused many social changes and relevant technical inventions such as the machine engine or the spinning machine. Before, the topic of creativity entered the scientific discourse other questions were raised and perceived as relevant by this time such as: “What are the limits of freedom of thought [...]” (Sternberg 1999, 20). Across the board, Addison (1711) is recognised as one of the first of his time to research the topic of creativity from an academic standpoint. He distinguished between talent and the original *genius*, followed by Hobbes (1730) who theorised creative imagination as imagination to being itself (Sternberg 1999). One can see that the attempts taken here lead already towards certain domains and approaches, which still define different research areas of creativity in academia. At that time, the *genius* (the inspired person) was distinguished from the supernatural and the concept of talent and assumed to exist in every male individual. Also, it was considered to be always affected by the environmental political atmosphere in its capacity of potential, which added a new dimension to the creative event in its whole: the interacting and influencing environment. Inspired by the technological and cultural changes, the benefits of striving for new was widely recognised and accepted. Creativity by this definition always favours the new over the old norm (Reckwitz 2013).

2.4 Creativity and its Cultural and Social Relation to Romanticism

The main change in the idea of creativity and its following research approaches happened with the turn of the romantic era as a consequence and contrast to the industrial revolution. The battle was fought between the intellect versus subjective feeling and shifted from mechanism towards individual emotions, which was expressed mainly in aesthetic expression and art (Ryhammar and Brolin 1999). Feelings and intuition were perceived as a new “democratic source of wisdom” (Sternberg 1999, 23). The fundamental approach in the second half of the 19th Century established Darwin with his theory of Natural selection and evolution. In 1859 Darwin published his work “Origin of the Species” and continued the well walked path of

challenging the biblical assumption of the transformation of mammals in one move. As with many theories by that time, they had a great impact crossing the borders of their scientific field up to how people understood and still understand the world. Darwin's work, with a focus on creativity, called for each species to be created independently. Rather than being fixed after being formed by the creator as in Genesis, creatures were instead understood as being able to transform and change by nature (Pope 2005). With this perspective, all the mystical power of the act of creation vanished and instead followed the "principle of self-generation" (42). Natural selection is based on diversity and adaptation, elements which are not logical from a human perspective – it is a process that happens unpredictably without comparable agreed sense.

From the perspective of diversity, research began to focus on the 'individual' and their differences. Consequently, in the second half of the 19th Century many authors began to explore the topic of creativity. The concept of the 'genio' survived and led the main discussion of creativity as being something carried out by the individual or being something provoked by one's environment. Continuing the idea of the inheriting 'genio' Galton (1869) assumed that certain families carried a creative 'gene'. Furthermore, he established the assumption that groups with certain ethnical origins or backgrounds to be more likely to carry such a potential than others. Here also the impact of the theory of evolution on later academic thoughts and theories is revealed. Many of the statements made by these theorists cannot be considered as politically or contemporarily relevant and correct by today's standards. Precisely because of this point, it is imperative to consider the first academic steps that creativity research took in order to understand its today's errors. Today, many of these early theorists are still referred to, even if done in a critical manner, as I have done here. It should be noted, however, that not all of the White masculine voices in creativity research excluded the possibilities, that more genders and ethnicities carry the potential of being creative beings (Becker 1995). Yet, the context in which the authors were producing their theories was during the time when colonialism was flourishing. All the theories and attempts to research on creativity in the 19th century stemmed mainly from a psychological or philosophical perspective (Becker 1995). Reckwitz (2013, 25) describes the development caused by the technological changes from this time on as the "Regime of the New". A very impactful event in the development of the understanding of creativity, globally but mainly

Western focused, was the invention of the visual medium of photography in the mid 19th Century. Reckwitz (2013) argued that this created a very visually pregnant dimension to the sensation of creativity on a social level.

The academic perception of this topic mainly took place within the field of psychology, which had its roots in the late 19th Century into the early 20th led by Freud's approaches towards the human psyche. Yet, these early attempts to scientifically explore human cognition were based on conclusions made from the study of individuals and their thoughts rather being qualitatively oriented. New data came into the field of study and changed the perspective on former theories by disapproving them with new qualitative and quantitative methods (Becker 1995). As a consequence of the also prominent and avantgarde field by the time of psychology different authors pointed out their belief in the correlation of creativity and insanity, this approach though found its origin more in the coming romantic era at the end of the 19th Century. Up to this point, the main focus still lay with the *genius*, which was often incarnated by the scientist and 'experimentalist' of this time (224). To follow one of the theories of that time formulated amongst others by Bethune the era or spirit of the time fostered creativity, which was understood as individualistic, democratic and free (Becker 1995). This additionally supports the *gifted* minds. As one can already read from the attempts and the image of creativity in this time, it was generally ascribed to those, who were also thinking about it. Here, the influence of Darwin's theory of evolution plays an important role. Darwin started to perceive and study individual differences (in the species) (Sternberg 1999). As a consequence, creativity was perceived as something that moved time and technology forward and smoothed the way for society to grow. At this point I want to refer again to Reckwitz (2013) who stated that 'Regime of the New' always require growth. Likewise, Lubart and Georgsdottir (2004) mention the understanding of *Western* creativity as a linear movement, metaphorically shown in the story of Genesis, which creates everyday step by step something new growing towards a final and closing 'product'.

Individualism is one of the keywords of the era of Darwin's "Origin of Species". As a concept, individualism was also applied as essential to creativity. Again coming back to "what were the limits of freedom of thought [...]" (22). So, creativity research took its first steps in academia in Natural Science, not Human Science. As a countermovement towards the events

of the upcoming industrial turn facing the new 20th Century, the romantic era brought back the human mind to nature and emotions away from mechanics. During this period creativity experienced a shift, especially for the artists, who “had a gift for aesthetic expression [...]” (Ryhammar and Brodin 1999, 261). Becker (1995), explored the approaches of the research into creativity in a study. She showed that the research of the topic of creativity dealt mainly with the questions of: what is creativity, who has creativity, what are the characteristics of creative people, who should benefit from the creativity and can creativity be increased through conscious effort? Another important figure in creativity research is Galton (1869), who tried to find answers to this question. It was also Galton (1869), who developed the divergent thinking approach, which paved the way later for the IQ-Test ⁷ (Sternberg 1999).

Methodologically, the IQ-Test can be seen as the starting point of academic research of creativity. Within this context, creativity was understood as an “internal part of intelligence” (26). This and other approaches mainly still dealt with the topic of creativity under the headline of the *genius* and the idea of the divergent thinking approach, which methodologically believed, that as more solutions in the form of answers are given to a problem (task, or question) as more intelligent and creative (diversely thinking) the person is considered to be (Sternberg 1999). Ryhammar and Brodin (1999) states that the research of creativity experienced three important points of departure: *Genius*, *Giftedness*, and *Creativity*.

2.5 Developments towards the Modern Creativity in Contemporary Culture and the *Creative Class*

Coming from this point of view the third understanding of creativity itself can be marked in the 1950s. It became a topic itself, where various approaches in psychology shifted towards the topic of creativity: the psychoanalytical, the cognitive, the behaviouristic and the

7. The ‘IQ Test’: the ‘Intelligence Quotient’, was established by L.M. Terman in 1924, to investigate the potential of individuals in their (academic) mediocracy. It is based on an attempt to measure the cognitive ability of its probands. Richardson (2002, 284) states critically: “Intelligence is what the intelligence test tests [...]”. The test results are highly depended on the ‘classifiers’ assumption of the probands performance. He recalls that important theorists by that time where asked about their understanding of intelligence, which led to very diverse perspectives.

humanistic (Ryhammar and Brolin 1999). Also, in these approaches the divergent thinking approach was adapted and led to Creativity Studies.

Out of these different ways of looking at the topic, three main lines of researching creativity crystallised: personality aspects ⁸, cognitive aspects ⁹, and experiments ¹⁰ to stimulate creativity. These attempts retain a strong relation to the first academic thoughts and theories taken towards creativity at the beginning of research around 1850 up to the beginning of the 20th Century.

As a consequence of the technological and consequently cultural changes in the last 150 years, Reckwitz (2013) formulates the idea of an *Kreativitätsdispositiv*. It shows the developments of current conditions of society in relation to creativity. As described at the beginning of this chapter, the term and the concept of creativity cannot be distinguished from the culture it is expressed and experienced in. Concerning the developments in general and the rush the topic experienced in the last 40 years, they can be explained through an aestheticisation of the phenomenon of creativity and an economisation of the social life. These two cultural components of the development of creativity caused a turn towards the so called *creativity-dispositive*, to replace and fill the missing social effects after the modern age. Reckwitz (2013) names three areas in which this phenomenon takes effect and becomes visible: the aesthetic (social and cultural) perception of creative products and actions, the identity produced by this perception and action, and the spaces which carry the function to perform it. In a more reflective manner, creativity research continued to evolve. With Galton's (1869)

8. The 'Personality Approach' concentrated on the characteristics of the creative person and tries to draw the relation of personality traits and creative activity. Main results which are stated from this approach is collected by Ryhammar and Brolin (1999, 263):

In general terms the creative person can be described, it would seem, as having curiosity, a strong desire for self-realisation, independence in thought and action, great self-confidence, a strong sense of self and a marked openness to impressions both from without and within; such a person is attracted, and stimulated by, obscurity and complexity has great sensitivity and has a large capacity for emotional involvement.

9. The 'Cognitive Approach' can be looked at in its lateral development. In the first part of the 20th Century, creativity was understood as: an aspect of intelligence in 1896, as an unconscious process in 1913, as problem-solving in 1926 and as an associative process in 1931 (Ryhammar and Brolin 1999). The divergent thinking approach can be named as one prominent example of this strategy to investigate the phenomenon of creativity. It tries to make creative thoughts measurable and to understand what leads to creativity. Ryhammar and Brolin (1999, 264) name "thinking in opposites, analogies, and metaphors [...]" as by the current as measuring indicators for cognitive creativity.

10. The 'Experimentalist Approach' tries to make creativity visible, by stimulating it with various environmental factors, to understand important aspects of encoring factors for the creativity of individuals or also later by groups (Ryhammar and Brolin 1999).

fundamental view of measuring even unintentionally creativity with his divergent thinking approach, creativity research took a strong step away from the mystical understanding of it towards something more haptic and measurable, which from then more and more intellectuals tried to untie. After these steps, the research took a violent break due to the European historical event of the second World War. The psychological field was, up to 1950, the main domain which reviewed the topic of creativity. Afterwards, the research moved towards the behaviouristic approach, which concentrated more on traits and the creative person or prominent creative personalities. Also, the topic experienced in this time significant attention in research. Creativity was seen as a new domain and also left its context of intellectual capacity to enter popular culture, which was caused by the wave of an understanding of individualism as a movement (Sternberg 1999). Wehner, Csikszentmihalyi, and Magyari-Beck (1991) state that from 1980 until the 1990's a focus was given on the person who creates, and the creative process he or she* undergoes. ¹¹, influential factors, the final product with a more socio-scientific drive, which experienced evolvement generally as a scientific concept. Also, in this period, a cultural change took place, which began in 1960's, where the term and concept of creativity entered popularly diverse domains. Provoked by the wish for liberalism in the youth expressed by the student movement in the 1960s creativity entered the popular culture. It opened a new understanding and appreciation of the resources which brings the concept of creativity into economics, where the binary structure of productivity in rationality and discipline was encrusted (Florida 2012). Florida (2012) describes this shift from waste towards responsible use of human and natural resources as the ethos of creative economics and ties it very closely to effectiveness and productiveness. Also, because of the overtake of creativity in non-obvious domains the scientific field does not just discuss the advantages but also the consequences and the approbations of the presence and requirement of creativeness within the majority of the contemporary public sector. In parallel, Reckwitz (2013) considered the consequences of these developments and understanding of creativity for the culture that it is performed in. He states that the post-war period up to today experienced cultural and social changes rather than technological ones. Yet, communication technology changed the way creativity took and takes place in average individuals' life. The

11. Creativity itself is strongly bounded to decision making. In the process up to a product, the creativeness undergoes a constant process of evaluation (Sternberg 2006). The creative process is the process of decision making and evaluation of the original idea of trying to get closer to the actual 'Product' or its realisation.

creative class, a term shaped by Florida (2012), is asked to always invent and create the (aesthetic) new. From 1970 it is possible to see a shift from capitalism towards an aesthetic capitalism, taking Reckwitz (2013) in account. Aesthetic means here not just a visual lair but also a sensational one. Reckwitz (2013) describes the expressed creativity being carried out to create a certain feeling, consisting of confirmation of the (social) environment rather than for the motivation of the creative action itself. This is provoked by the visual communication of small actions of the lives of individuals by pictures and technologies allowing to share or communicate these actions. Trigger and reason for this trend are the connected feelings of this action, which provides for the individual a certain feeling of control (of reality). The communication and the production of communication receive response and feedback of the environment which seeks for something new. Structurally, the market forces an aesthetisation and economisation of creativity and causes the *creativity-dispositive* as described above. At the same time Florida (2012) states that creativity can be the solution for our contemporary problems, such as climate change and social inequality. He requires a society, in which every person's creativity is acknowledged and enabled. Briksman (2009) points out the significance of the creative product in the contemporary understanding of creativity. It can be seen as an indicator of the degree of creativity itself. Diverse disciplines and domains serve themselves with creativity to innovate their field and allow it to grow. Creativity is always related to a product, otherwise it cannot be evaluated and by this, the creative process receives its rate of creativity or value. By the requirement of creativity to end always in a product the condition is even taken further, creativity does not just need to result in a product but also in the productiveness of the product, which is majorly oriented on the outside by trying to be as useful as fitful and as efficient as possible. It is important at this point to analyse the assumption that today's creativity is just visible within products, which are additionally also useful for others than just to the creative person himself or herself. Briksman (2009, 33) defines: "A creative scientific or inherent artistic product constitutes or incorporates a novel solution to a problem, inherent in a background of prior products, but not soluble based on these prior products themselves [...]"

Reckwitz (2013) takes the argument of the evaluated creative product further and states that already the act of creativity is visible and evaluated by its aesthetic notion: "In the creative-dispositive a coupling takes place of marketisation/capitalistic dynamics and

aesthetic sociality [...]” (Reckwitz 2013, 28).

2.6 Placing the Topic in the Global Debate

The history and development of the research of creativity offers fundamental key points to investigate the origin and understanding creativity has today. Williams (2015) describes it as human activity and Briksman (2009) states that creativity is perceived as naturally given and easily expressed. Besides this notion, creativity is a phenomenon which is tied to its cultural stock of knowledge it circulates in. It is limited and shaped by the entities it is bounded into and the information, images and meaning which are attached to it. This chapter tried to investigate this different aspects, to take a reflected point of view by researching into the form of creativity contemporarily. To understand why creativity in *Western* societies is approached and practiced as it is, it is important to understand, who brought it into the spotlight and in which manners. This is why this chapter took a historiometric approach¹² to introduce the popular concept of creativity in *Western* societies. Being originally born out of an intellectual field applied to scientists and artists, the psychological aspect of the concept of creativity extended its investigation towards the field of education. All of this form expressing and taking creativity into focus as topic in context of producing something new. Yet, it is also possible to see it alternatively in a context of repetition and ritualisation (Reckwitz 2013). Since it still represents a human experience, which is collectively felt and known, yet not visible.

12. The ‘Historiometric Approach’ tries to draw an understanding from objects by looking at it over a period of time following its evolvement and transformation to grasp its cultural corpus (Sternberg 1999).

3 Culturally Diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity

Before starting this chapter, I want to refer as an introduction of this chapter to the article “Creativity East and West: perspectives and parallels”. In the previous chapter: Chapter 2 “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies”, the terms ‘*West*’ or ‘*Western*’ already made use of ‘broad generalities’ (Averill, Chon, and Hahn 2001). Orienting on these statements the terms are held in italic throughout the whole work, to respect the notion it carries. Averill, Chon, and Hahn (2001) tried to differentiate between the concepts of *East* and *West*. Overall, the terms describe geographical global areas. ‘*West*’ generally refers to Europe in general and other countries that are European originated. Within this distinction, one can find dissonances of multi variable factors that do not allow for such a generalisation, for example, countries such as Canada or the USA. These examples both have Native communities, with different ways of perceiving, living and being that existed before colonisation. Here, the second generalisation of the terms *East* and *West* becomes apparent: it does not only describe a geographical distinction but also a cultural one. Certain characteristics of behaviour, ways of thinking and rituals are stereotypically-culturally attached to the geographical terms. I want to emphasise that these generalisation terms are used in the following paper with an awareness of the individuality and variety that *East* and *West* have to offer – especially today with increasing media content and communication across these geographical borders. For a long time in human history, geographical borders had an actual physical impact on living opportunities and environmental factors, and society today still maintains evidence of this impact through the embedded culture and its rituals. For example Korea, China and Japan, which had been strongly influenced by Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. ‘The three Teachings’ and the impact of this influence can still be widely held today (Averill, Chon, and Hahn 2001). This paper will go into more depth for two of the three teachings.

3.1 Culture and Creativity, Exploring the Potential in its Relation

The last chapter “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western Societies*” left off in the 1980’s in which a new importance was given to the topic of creativity within a cultural context. Many voices raised during that time, starting with Edwards and followed by Bhaba, Spivak and Hall, spoke of Orientalism, and enlightened the *Western*, White and male view of the world (Grimm 1997). The Postcolonial Studies¹³ and Cultural Studies were born and also took a look into the understanding of creativity in the *West* to start to investigate the phenomenon globally and more diversely.

The majority of theoretical attempts towards the topic of creativity can be found in the *Western Academia* (Niu and Kaufman 2013). In the 1960’s, influencing factors were added to the appearance of creativity from the *Western* theoretical view. Rhodes (1961) broke it down into the four P’s:

- Creative Product
- Creative Person
- Creative Process
- Creative Environment; what is termed by ‘press’

So, the influencing factors can be divided into person-centred and environment-centred variables (Lau and Na Na Hui 2004). From the environmental perspective physical setting family, school/ workplace, field of endeavour and culture are all potential variables. From the person-centred, noted variables include intelligence, knowledge, cognitive styles, personalities, and motivation (Sternberg 1999). Up until the 1960’s, the person-centred factors experienced a deeper look than the environmental factors, potentially due to the fact that research and methodology began in the field of psychology as mentioned above. Different approaches in methodology in the field of creativity research explored these factors

13. ‘Postcolonial Studies’ are a discipline which is located among the Cultural Studies. It is an interdisciplinary field of study, which tries to enlighten hegemonic structures within a global society, which even ground up to today on the historic consequences of colonialism (Grimm 1997).

and will be described in Chapter 5 “Methodology – Presenting the Case Study”. Culture as a factor can be identified as an environmental aspect. Yet, culture is a phenomenon of its own and creates and shapes all other named environmental factors. Lubart and Georgsdottir (2004, 35) define culture to refer and places creativity in it: “Culture refers to a shared system of cognition, behaviours, customs, values, rules, and symbols concerning how a set of people interact with their social and physical environment [...]”. Culture influences creativity in terms of how culture shapes our understanding of creativity and the definitions of creativity, which are culturally created. In the *Western* understanding, creativity is highly bound to production (Lubart and Georgsdottir 2004). The divergent thinking test approach, which requires the production of answers and ideas, *Western* theoretical understanding of creativity took an environmentally centred view on creativity. Not just the theoretical development, but also the mystical origin of creativity in the *West*, fostered this perspective. The cosmic creation in Genesis developed in a “linear movement towards a new point [...]” (35). Lubart also states that “creativity from a *Western* perspective can be defined as the ability to produce work that is novel and appropriate” (Sternberg 1999, 339). By ‘novel’, here it meant the creation of an object that did not appear in a field yet or, alternatively, an existent object that changes functionality by use in a different context that it was originally meant (Sternberg 1999). Creativity in this respect is about creating new vibrant images that feed the recipient. The word recipient implies an important aspect of the *Western* understanding of creativity, there must be a visible and judgeable product: the creative product. The divergent thinking approach needed to offer a solution to a social or cultural problem, which means consequently that the creative process or creativity itself is mostly goal-driven and orientated in the *Western* context. Further, the already provoked or motivated creativity is socially judged in the end and experiences the final label of being creative or not by its environment, for which certain factors need to be satisfied for example novelty and productivity by serving the social environment it takes place in, whereby the aspect of appropriateness is met. Unfortunately, not just in academia but also in the popular culture creativity experienced especially after the 1960s attention, which led to a product orientated point of view¹⁴. Pope (2005) states that the word creativity happens to be replaced by the idea of production. Florida (2012)

14. “A product is every object, which experiences attention by the market, or is chosen, offered to be bought, to be used or for to be consumed, to satisfy wishes and general needs [...]”(Kotler 2011, 587).

is one of the main authors, who revitalised the word creativity and brought into the new millennium of 2000 and evened the way to use the term of commercial creativity in manifold sectors but rather in the context of production than creativity when looked onto it from divers' perspectives. Similar to the before mentioned Reckwitz's (2013) 'Regime of the New' in which the society and culture focus on producing new to consume new reactions.

3.2 The *Eastern* View of Creativity

When non-*Western* academic perspectives of creativity are considered, one can also find the main aspects of *Western* creativity woven into their understandings. Such as in especially in *Eastern*, or more specifically Chinese, contemporary understandings of creativity. At this point, colonialism and the global shift towards a world economy can be assumed as arguments for this converging development. Nevertheless, novelty and appropriateness are cross-cultural factors. Creativity always occurs in an environment of certain values, at least in terms of appropriateness. It is to be emphasised at this point that these factors can be understood and interpreted differently. The *Western* view of productivity, novelty and appropriateness translates into rather a more vast understanding, for example, in Chinese definitions of creativity, where it is part of everyone's life and accessible to anyone. This is in direct contrast to the concept of the 'genio' in *Western* societies. Further, the field of the appliance of creativity is looser and can appear in any sector such as in the culinary domain. Also, one of the major differences lies in the approval of creativity in the judgement of its environment. It is about creativity itself, which can reward people by itself in the Chinese understanding and not by its environmental context it takes place in. Creativity is accessible for everyone by being achieved through hard work and practice. In contrast, the *Western* concepts still carry the idea of the divine spirit given to some mainly White males (Niu and Kaufman 2013).

It is not only the cultural narrative and origin of creativity that differs between *Eastern* and *Western* cultures, but also the domains in which creativity is expressed and practised. Lubart states that *Eastern* expressions of creativity concentrate mainly on the domain of poetics, the artistic and the everyday life domain (Sternberg 1999). In the last two decades,

Eastern perception and practice of creativity also entered the academic discourse of creativity and challenged the understanding of creativity as a gift to some and changed it to become something wider and more accessible. This differentiation between a rare gift and an accessible act has been referred to as small and big creativity: c/C. Big 'C' describes the *genius*, who produces creativity, which seems to be more valuable or from greater quality. The 'c' embraces the so-called everyday creativity, which takes place in small acts of everyday life e.g. often attributed to culture, in which you are forced to be creative to act on small resources or to survive (Merrottsy 2013).

The Chinese, and also in the more general understanding, gives the creative process most weight of creativity and, as explained above, understands the process also as a part of creativity itself. It finds itself more process-orientated than product-orientated than the *Western* concept and image of creativity. The understandings of creativity are based and rooted in the culture one lives in. Especially in *Western* cultures creativity is shaped very strongly by its economic systems, which also aims for production. Considering its romantic origin in the *West*, the concept of creativity seems to have lost its free spirit. The *Western* process of creativity can be categorised in terms of: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. Leaning on the mystical origin of the Judeo-Christian idea to create structure from chaos, to "bring order to a formless void [...]" (Sternberg 1999, 341). Having six days of creation, which take place as a process building up upon each step from a beginning towards an ultimate end. It is a linear movement with a cognitive problem-solving tone (Sternberg 1999). In the Chinese practice of creativity, nature was not just often the theme of creativity in being expressed in the product but also as a way of walking through the process of creativity, seeing it as an approach towards creativity: naturally or organically. This concept can be found not just in the belief system of the circular perspective of the world or processes but also as a resource one can open up to and receive and express. The cultural aspect causing the most significant differences can be found in the social structures of *Eastern* and *Western* cultures. It is the *Western* idea born out of the enlightenment movement of individualism and self-reliance and the way of living in collective cultures as e.g. in the *East*, which is more likely led by social and moral aspects (Lubart and Georgsdottir 2004).

In *Eastern*, or especially traditional Chinese definitions of creativity, the creative person

does not require the categorisations or labelling of an outer authority. Thus, creativity comes into being by validation of its social environment, but here “[c]reativity rewards people for the rarest response [...]” (Niu and Kaufman 2013, 78). Creativity here can be achieved through hard work and practice. This understanding of creativity is caused by general cultural beliefs and values, which can be identified for example in ‘Shu Neng Sheng Qiao’, where the sentence of ‘熟能生巧’ was established, which translates to ‘practice makes perfect’ or to ‘with familiarity you learn the trick’ (DeepL 2020). Through practice and training basic skills every day, which also carry a meditative and by this spiritual aspect ¹⁵, it is possible to achieve excellence. The way towards this excellence achieved in various ways is understood as creativity in Chinese culture. This has origins in a mystical belief of understanding cosmic creation as an ongoing process (Sternberg 1999). It follows the Confucian attempt of purposeful engagement in this process. As, “[t]he Chinese notion of creativity in many ways equals perfection and excellence, resulting in the kind of achievement with significant contribution to the field they have chosen” (Niu and Kaufman 2013, 79). In this understanding, creativity is not seen as fixed entity in the linear movement of growth but something what can evolve organically. In the Confucian belief the creative person carries the characteristics of having a high moral standard and being open-minded. It draws parallels of the academic formulated condition of carrying the attribute of being socially appropriate. Also, this aspect can be seen as similarity in the here common understanding of creativity from *East* and *West*. Yet, when put into practice in its cultural contexts creativity differs in its practical execution in that aspect.

The *Eastern* idea of creative action always begins from the perspective of wholeness, everything is already existent. This is in contrast with the *Western* idea which purposes that creative action brings something new into existence. This *Western* idea of creation can be seen, for example, in the narrative of Genesis – in this light, something new cannot be created but just made visible or transformed from what is already there or given. It is about the “personal fulfilment, a connection to a primordial realm, of the expression of an inner

15. The term ‘spirituality’ can be related to different contexts as e.g. religious ones or other institutionalised which organise further concepts such as divinity or sacred. In this thesis it refers to the definition of London (2007, 1480) stating that “being a vital force within living beings [...]”. Further more, it orientates on the description of it given by Snowber (2007, 1449) who defines “spirituality as the place one can make connections to the inner life, the other, the natural world, to the numinous, but most of all to ourselves [...]”.

essence or ultimate reality [...]” (Sternberg 1999, 304). It is a continuous natural process of renewing, as in natural objects which are brought into life and then die within a cycle of endless repletion – the circle of life. Processes are understood as circular not linear. This idea of creativity imitates the natural developments that we see in nature and the universe. Often, artists do not create something new but the creative act lies in recreating and reinterpreting traditional material as dances or paintings. Thus, creativity is realised by the act of achieving the ultimate state of being or perfection and the individual way of moving towards this.

This understanding of creativity means to arrive in one’s own individual path. Yet, the *Eastern* understanding offers to view creativity, also on a level of popular culture, from diverse angles. The practice of just the perception of creativity can already be seen as creative. Even the simple act of observations and perceptions can be creative – we start to be creative at the very first step of observation because our capacity only allows us to see from a certain angle. The motivation to create – from an approach to know the world shifted to an approach to know the way we understand the world (Goodman 1975).

Lubart calls this practice of understanding and creativity a “successive reconfiguration of an initial totality [...]” (Sternberg 1999, 341). Maduros conducted research involving Indian painters and found that during the creative process the artist consciously tried to let go of the ego and his subjective perception and instead attempted to connect with a spiritual element, not an individual-centred but global view (Sternberg 1999). Certainly, this is a personal process, yet aiming towards a free perspective onto the to-be-created object or process, being led by the whole, which is already there and providing. “The artist experiences intimate *oneness*, with the spirit of the object [...]” (341). In some way the object creates itself or realises itself through the artist by him opening to this huge resource, for example through meditation – the creative object communicates while coming into being (Sternberg 1999).

An attempt to express the inner truth of oneself from the point of view towards the topic or the creative object, inherently means that the personal connection towards the final product is closer than in the *Western* product- or subject orientated view (Sternberg 1999). The Greek verb of create *krainein* can be translated by ‘fulfil’. The Buddhist concept of emptiness, means to empty oneself from one’s ego and subjectivity (which will be covered in more detail in the next Section 3.3. “Creativity and Taoism”). Due to the process of emptying, the

person can become receptive to the environment and create what is already present yet not realised by the providing whole. In the context of creativity, the creative person is fulfilled with the object or creative product, which wants to be realised through the artist. Being empty happens to be at the same time being fulfilled. Again, *Eastern* creativity focuses more on the process and the state of being than of production or making. This concept can also be found in the field of nuclear physics, in which a quantum vacuum is empty and full at the same time and builds the location of energy (Pope 2005).

3.3 Creativity and Taoism

Looking at other perceptions or realisations of creativity in a broader cultural contexts, the introduction of Chapter 2 “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies” opens by taking a linguistic point of view which is crucial in the following topic of creativity and Taoism. As described, each concept or object of a certain culture is always read by the narrated images linked to it. The philosophy of Taoism believes in the limitation of perception by exactly these factors, of culture, social role and cultural narrated images of objects and the symbolic and metaphoric organ of language.

Taoism is on its own a spiritual path, yet with roots in the Buddhist religion. It can be understood as an intuition or personal knowledge. The practices and movements the individual takes should be motivated by free will and follow the approach of let-be attitude (Kuo 1996). Taoism understands the world and its objects as independent and unrelated entities in the way as we perceive them as humans or “the independent ‘it’” (Pope 2005, 149). Following the *Eastern* drive of creativity to be universally accessible, it is an attempt, that everyone carries ‘Buddha Nature’¹⁶ inside of them. Many creatives in Chinese domains of geography, cartography, etc. called themselves to be important Taoists. In a similar way to the linguistic approach of everything receiving meaning by being labelled and narrated, also called semantics, the perceiver of an entity can just see the concept of it and not the true form of it, according to the “principle of reality or objectification [...]” (Kuo 1996, 199). In

16. It replies to one of the Asian centred questions in religion and its philosophy if people can content the ‘Buddha Nature’. It is mainly to achieve the ‘Buddha Nature’ (perfection), whereas here it is already within everyone in the now (King 1991).

Taoism, the perceiver has to see the object, not through the cultural code of e.g. language but the object free from filters. The process of practising and achieving a filter-free perspective is called ‘Tao’ – ‘the way’.

Tao can also be seen as an allocentric perspective, which tries to become aware all influencing aspect of an object seen, and tries to clean oneself off it by the awareness about it. These factors as described above come from the interaction and communication within humans as language, tradition, culture, and human needs (Kuo 1996). In order, to be able to do so, one needs to be completely open towards the object, which in turn wants to be seen in its true form. Often artists take this approach in their work, by filling themselves with the object’s being and, through this means, to become the object. Here a relationship can be drawn to the approach of *oneness*, which will be examined in the following Section 3.4. “Self -Actualisation and the Psychology of Being”. For this, the individual is requested to completely rip off their subjectivity and beliefs and leave behind the motivation of will. It is described by Kuo (1996) as the philosophy of not learning day-by-day but losing day-by-day, which can also be called the search for Tao. As an example, Kuo (1996, 201) cites a poem: “Seeing the mountain as the mountain. The mountain was not the mountain. Seeing the mountain as a mountain [...]”. In practice, it is about an effortless attitude, a fluid way of being led by the object itself. To be able to see the mountain as it is, it is needed to “reveal the simple (uncarved) self”, one’s “original nature” (201). Following this philosophy, the act of will blocks the way to love and access to one’s true self, which has the ability to see. May claims that an objective perspective is created by the act of love by accepting someone or something for what they are and let them be and become through the act of love (Kuo 1996). The attitude of unconditional love for the object comes from a selfless state, which practices the former named let-go attitude, off the ego and personal beliefs, expectations and by it produced images. Looking again on the poem quoted by Kuo (1996, 201) saying “[s]eeing the mountain as the mountain. The mountain was not the mountain. Seeing the mountain as a mountain [...]”. As an example of a selfless focus onto the creative object practically and visible applied, the concept of authorship in China did not exist until colonialism brought it into the discourse. It was common before to be not labelled for important works (Kuo 1996). Tao comes into being by accepting all parts of the positive and negative characteristics of an object, to truly see it. As these forces of negative and positive aspects also called ‘Yin and

Yang' interact with each other, it is assumed that the energy to create arises from this interplay. Also, *Western* academics, for example Rogers (1954) and Maslow (1968), describe such an approach, what can be found in the Section 3.4. "Self-Actualisation and the Psychology of Being".

What is more, the attitude of openness or as named above an act of unconditional love creates a vulnerable position or a moment of weakness in which the subject is open for the objects nature and can let it stream and happen through oneself. The moment of the contradictory forces of yang and yin create an unstable situation in which the person is fluid and open to be moved, transformed, transported, or driven by the energy arisen of the interplay of forces.

In Taoism, in a contrast to the divergent thinking approach in *Western* academia, the divergent production is not achieved by creating manifold from one impulse, but is created organically, since "Tao creates One; One creates Two; Two creates Three: out of Three, All things are created [...]" (Kuo 1996, 194). This organic understanding of growth for processes is also transferred to the set of morals what is culturally shared here "[t]he main task is not to conquer but to harmonize the struggle resulted from the ceaseless interplay of yin and yang" (206). Again, it states that one does not find the solution but the solution finds one. Kuo (1996) uses Kekulé, who took the first attempt towards the chemical concept of atoms, as an example to illustrate this interplay. One day, Kekulé fell asleep while working. And in a state of unconscious flow, in which he still held consciousness, the image of an atom raised in front of him. Thus, within the let-go attitude, creativity can emerge, the practice towards this ability of non-being or emptiness is also seen in Tao as the creative product in the process of creativity.

Generally, the idea of *Eastern* creativity is to move into a greater whole, while being whole. Within this definition, the meaning behind appropriateness in the context of *Eastern* creativity becomes clearer by fitting to a changing context and working collaboratively within one's environment (Rogers 1954). In the following Section 3.4. "Self-Actualisation and the Psychology of Being", it is shown how Rogers (1954) distinguishes between two forms of creativity: constructive and deconstructive creativity. One form serves and fosters the environment it takes place in and one form abuses its environmental resources and acts out of the wrong motivation of an egocentric perspective.

3.4 Self-Actualisation and the Psychology of Being

In *Western* academia, a similar approach was taken by Rogers in 1954 and Maslow in 1968. In the research of creativity, Maslow's work on self-actualisation through and by creativity is well recognised and ground-breaking for the following and contemporary works on the topic of creativity. Yet, it was Rogers (1954) who, ten years before Maslow (1968) published his work, applied a holistic psychological perspective onto the topic of creativity. In my opinion, Rogers' (1954) work considers the topic of creativity more practically and deeply than Maslow's (1968).

Rogers (1954) claimed that the former perspective of creativity and its research was led from a stereotypical and normative point of view. From a scientific standpoint, up to this point, the orientation and the measurement of creativity concerned the creative product, which marks the closure of the creative process. Rogers, however, believed differently. First of all, he proposed that the creative product is not domain dependent. He thus widened with the definitions of creativity including, for example, the belief that even the work on one's personality can be read as creative (Rogers 1954). Secondly, he proposed that the degree of creativity is nothing that indicates creativity itself, in the same argument he formulates the assumption of everyday-life creativity, which Maslow (1968) later also described. In Rogers' opinion, creativity can be unseen and unrecognised, yet still exist. For him, the core of creativity or even the essence lies within the motivation of it, the place from which the energy for a creating or expressing action is born. He formulates creativity being a practice towards the highest version of oneself "to actualise himself, to become his potentialities" (251).

Rogers description and redefinition of creativity is similar to the act of striving for perfection, as in 'Buddha Nature'. As described beforehand, in Tao the idea of moving towards a greater whole is very similar to Roger's idea to be the purest version of oneself and find one's true nature. The act, which needs to be done to grow, following Rogers, is to build new relationships as individual with one's environment (Rogers 1954). As in Tao, the process of creativity needs a transformation of the current image of the world-perception, including beliefs and with it connected values. Rogers called this movement being very naturally

embodied in humans as “[t]he trend in human and organic life to extend, develop and mature – the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism, to extent that such activation enhances the organism or the self [...]” (Rogers 1954, 251). The way towards reaching this point of the *process*¹⁷ is achieved through openness. Here, Rogers’ origin of his academic domain comes to forth: the individual needs to open up towards all parts and experiences made so far, since blocking locks the natural stream towards creativity by holding in an unnatural manner parts of oneself hidden. All parts of experiences and the self are welcomed in this idea of actualising one-self. Without honesty and a loving view of oneself, the path is not possible. As Tao describes, the practising-individual needs to try to find the balance between the contradiction of more than a binary understanding – between ‘Yin and Yang’. Openness towards all of the individual experiences, openness towards own experiences and surrounding extends oneself towards growth. In “Towards a Theory of Creativity” it is called *extensionality*, openness equals *extensionality*. As described above to unify with the surroundings and the to be created object (Rogers 1954).

To connect to the last point made in this chapter on Taoism and creativity, to empty to receive or be full, Rogers implies the principle of constructive and deconstructive creativity. One which serves the individual’s environment and one which harms it. It follows the principle also named hereby Rogers that the creative individual is always connected and unified within one’s environment. Deconstructive creativity does not just harm the environment but harms oneself as part of the environment (Rogers 1954). The relation of Chinese creativity and nature gains shape to put into this theoretical context as an ultimate one – *oneness*.

At this point I want to re-quote Parker Palmer found in bell hooks “all about love”:

To be fully alive is to act [...] action to be any way that we can co-create reality with other beings and the Spirit [...] Action, like a sacrament, is the visible form of an invisible spirit, an outward manifestation of inward power. But as we act, we not only express what is in us and help to give shape to the world; we also receive what is outside us, and reshape our inner selves [...] (hooks 2001, 76)

Within this quote the word act can be interchanged with the concept of creativity at an

17. The word ‘Process’ is written here in italic letters since process usually indicates a linear movement towards an aimed point. This concept of a process does not apply from this presented philosophy of an organic finding of the way a loving way. It asks to allow non-linear movements with all its experiences attached included.

everyday level: namely, any action changes and shapes the environment and by this is creative. Looking closer into this quote, one can see, that the principle of the interaction of one's environment, the individual's internal world, and its intercommunication, also takes place in Taoism in that one is aware of this interaction and acts accordingly. This quite describes how the active interaction of an individual into and with one's environment can be considered as creativity. Furthermore, creativity itself can be read here as a spiritual or spiritual practice. So, with his concept of constructive and deconstructive attempt towards creativity Rogers (1954) raises the question of how one wants to realise one's creativity, this spiritual act: environment serving or deconstructing?

In this attempt, it asks of the individual's constructive behaviour towards the act of creativity. How is it possible to achieve this kind of constructive creativity, following Rogers' (1954) and Maslow's (1968) approach of self-actualisation? At this point, I want to take back a look into the principles in Tao, where love is exactly this embracing and effortless forgiving way to achieve balance and to actualise oneself. bell hooks (2001) writes in her book "all about love", that the way towards wholeness and healing is the way of love. For this, the individual is requested to be forgiving and compassionate with one's environment, which is substantial for spiritual growth, and can create a healthy co-reality as Palmer names it. Robin Casarjian states: "Forgiveness is a way of life that gradually transforms us from being helpless victims of our circumstances to being powerful and loving 'co-creators' of our reality [...] It is the fading away off the perceptions that cloud our ability to love" (139). Linguistically the word forgiveness appears often in the connection to the word act – the 'act of forgiving' (Martinich 2012). Thus, in this context forgiveness describes a certain way of acting or a ritualised known act. Casarjian describes it as letting perceptions fade, which will lead to an openness towards someone or something (hooks 2001). As forgiveness being a real action it leads us towards a state of wholeness, leaving the perception of victim-hood of oneself and creating a position of openness. This openness as named before makes us receptive for our environment as it comes. Also, the act of forgiveness brings letting go the ego, which often blocks us to see our environment as it is.

Also, Rogers talks about acceptance and forgiving: "It means tolerance for ambiguity where ambiguity exists. It means the ability to receive much conflicting information without

forcing closure upon the situation. It means what the general semantics calls the ‘extensional orientation’” (Rogers 1954, 254). By being confronted with the whole variety of the environment through awareness for it and one’s own experiences, new information can be received out of which creativity can be born. Also, this is a product of a non-judgemental position towards what creativity is.

Rogers (1954) takes it further by distinguishing between constructive and deconstructive creativity, one which serves the environment and one which destroys it. This perspective is important as it includes an awareness of and openness towards the environment as either a resource of creativity or the stimulation for it. One could argue with this against creativity, which invents anything that holds negative aspects for nature, animals and humanity from a sustainable point of view, but this just as a side note.

Connecting Rogers’ (1954) and Maslow’s (1968) ideas of self-actualisation and personal growth and the different spiritual attempts taken towards creativity from diverse cultural point of views it can be formulated, that: creativity unfolds through personal fulfilment in the environment of an already meant happening. If we assume that everything is already whole, creativity is the act of transforming parts of the whole or bringing them somewhere else than originally located.

Also, Maslow (1968) orientates on the main strands of Tao and Rogers’s (1954) approaches. Maslow also claims that creativity needs to be freed from its former costumes and picks up on the idea of self-actualisation as a necessity and potentiality of creativity. He claims people, who realise SA creativity (self-actualisation-creativity) are closely bonded to the physical world rather than abstract theories and concepts about objects and things. Here, the connection to Tao can be retrieved, of unlearning and loosing acquired conceptual knowledge: *to see the real mountain* (3.3. Creativity and Taoism). Maslow (1968) amongst, understands creativity as originally barrier-free and accessible for every being. He claims that the person, should not be afraid of one’s own emotions and body of thought. As it is with children when they create free off fear of possible judgement (Maslow 1968). This childlike acceptance of the circumstances of the self and the environment can be connected to awareness and the presence in the now, which is crucial for the practices towards self-growth named above. In Kuo’s (1996) essay about Taoism and creativity she quotes Chang (1962): “When one

extremely tranquil, then the Heavenly Light is given forth. He who emits. This Heavenly Light sees his Real self” (Kuo 1996, 208). This state has a trance-like notion, which can be reached through e.g. meditation. After this people are more receptive to Tao – the non-being or let go-attitude (Kuo 1996).

3.5 The Concept of *Flow*

In the 1960s Csíkszentmihályi came up with the concept of *flow*. The motivation of this research was to understand in which moments of people’s life, they are happy. Taken one presented quote from a TED-Talk ¹⁸ held by Csíkszentmihályi describes the experience of his concept of *flow* in 2004 as the follow:

You are in an ecstatic state to such point, that you feel you almost you don't exist. I have experienced this time and again [...] my hand seems to avoid myself, and I have nothing to do with what is happening. I just sit there in a state of wonderment. And [the music] just flows out of itself [...] (Csíkszentmihályi 2004)

This is an excerpt from Csíkszentmihályi’s interviews on the study of flow with one of the leading composers within this decade of the 1970s. It can be understood as a state of non-being, here presented in the context of creating music or a musical piece.

As investigation took place, it crystallised, that people are happy in a certain state of mind, which he then summed by describing it by the concept of *flow*, as many of his interviewees used the word flow as description for the moment of joy or ecstasy as Csíkszentmihályi calls it. When the person enters a new reality the feeling of ecstasy occurs. It reminds of Rogers’ (1954) attempt to be open for new relations with the environment in order to grow (Csíkszentmihályi 2004).

This feeling of no-existence, which is described by the interviewee is strongly connected to the capacity of the human brain. Csíkszentmihályi (2004) explains by the means that this capacity is just able to process a certain amount of information. In this case, creating outs

18. ‘TED’ – Technology, Entertainment, Design as the name implies, is a non-profit-organisation, which presents different lectures about various topics in a compressed, accessible and fresh way. It is communicated on-and offline and takes place in different venues all over the world. The conferences began in 1984 and aimed to inspire and share knowledge of various disciplines (“Our Organization” 2019).

a person needs. All the capacity merged to concentrate on the task he or she* is doing. Consequently, the capacity does not suffice for further information such as how the body feels, which other cognitive processes are going on, or which problems are currently taking place in the person's life. In the moment of this absolute experience, there is no capacity left for him or her to observe other information (Csíkszentmihályi 2004). "He can't even feel, he is hungry or tired, his body disappears. His identity disappears from his consciousness... Existence is temporally suspended..." (Csíkszentmihályi 2004). To reach this state, certain points have to be met. The person who creates, needs to have a balance of skill and challenge of the task. It needs to be very direct feedback to be provided and the goal setting for the action needs to be close in the sense of being reachable and doable (Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi 2014).

This balance can maybe reach out to the concept of balance within Tao. Also, it is stated that *the experience of flow* can occur in any action or domain (Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi 2014). Here, the reference to the former point of Indian painters can be drawn, who do understand *the experience of flow* as a spiritual connection, where the object creates itself through the artist. Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi (2014) state, that *the experience of flow* occurs cross-culturally in any domain – a universal experienced state of energy for creation or action. Also, here it is stated that the individual feels this experience as exceptionally positive, which causes the wish for reexperience, which also leads in the long term to psychological growth.

3.6 *Flow*, Self-Actualisation, Personal-Growth and Mental Health

Even though these theories do not concentrate on personality aspects of the person experiencing *flow* or realising themselves in self-actualisation, Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi (2014) formulate the idea of an 'autolectic-personality' – someone who acts only out of themselves in exactly the manner they want to and not environment orientated agency. Also, here it draws similarities to Rogers' (1954) idea of self-actualisation to reach the ultimate self or Maslows (1968) SA-creativity. It was taken that far to state,

that self-actualisation and creativity happen to be equals (Runco, 2018 p.1). Runco (2018) calls to mind, that the ability of self-actualisation needs a certain degree of “experience and maturity [...]” (Runco, 2018, 2). Such as, Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi (2014) differ, yet accessible to everyone, *the experience of flow* to emerge in different intensity and shape for diverse people. Both in creativity and self-actualisation lay “a motivational force” (Runco 2018, 2). Yet, Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi (2014) says that creativity and self-actualisation following these theories are indicators for mental health, one could argue against it, by pointing onto Van Gogh or other artists and creatives, who did not fit the category of mental health. In my way of applying these theories, self-actualisation can be seen as a motivator for striving for mental health.

Also, people who suffer from depression can be very much aware of themselves, and be motivated to work upon themselves, maybe even more than people of life long mental healthiness. Maslow (1968) only claims, that this can lead towards mental health such as Rogers (1954), who asks of the creative person to open up towards all the range of the individual experiences, what does not mean correlative lifelong healthiness but a way towards a certain satisfaction. Acting after the principles of self-actualisation leads to a lower waste of energy to fight oneself. I believe, that artists can be creative as in a healing process in which they speak their ultimate truth and let stream the inner world to the outside, as Maslow describes the need to be creative as wish to communicate to not feel isolated in one’s reality and the ability of letting stream one’s emotions by ”resolving a dichotomy into a higher, more inclusive, unity, more inclusive, unity, amounts to healing a split in the person and making him more unified [...]” (Maslow 1968, 145).

A study was taken to find (dis)-correlation of depression and self-actualisation, it resumes, that self-actualisation is not depended or likely influenced by mental states of depressions, yet certain aspects as pessimism and a low self-esteem have negative effects on the perception of self and the self-regard (Berndt, Kaiser, and Van Aalst 1982). At this point, I want to emphasise again, that as in Tao, the theory of self-actualisation is a practice and can lead to a certain state and is not the state itself. In her study, “Spiritual Wellness and Depression” Westgate (1996) even concludes that a spiritual and self-actualising path can be part of a clinical cure of depression.

These most mature of all people were also strongly childlike. These same people, the strongest egos ever described and the most individual, were also precisely the ones who could be most easily ego-less, self-transcending, and a problem-centred. But this is precisely what the great artist does. (Maslow 1968, 140)

In 1995 Deleuze published his work “The Immanence: a Life” in which he wrote down this statement: “It’s not beginnings and endings that count, but middles. Things and thoughts advance or grow out from the middle, and that’s where you have to get to work, that’s where everything unfolds” (Pope 2005, xv). It is about the gaps in the contrasts and finding the balance in it to express it. This balance or the searching for balance brings the individual satisfaction, which after Rogers (1954) contains the basis for the motivation towards a creating act. Here, he points out the unnecessary distinction of creativity in good or bad, since the action itself is creativity and not the product and is an evaluation by its social environment (Rogers 1954).

Later, the Creativity Studies distinguish between small and big creativity – ‘c/C’, as mentioned before, in order to represent the concepts of everyday creativity and the creativity following the concept of ‘genio’ – the creativity with great impact on its society in which it is created and applied. Yet, one can argue, that even though labels were created to acknowledge different kinds of creativity (later even distinguished in the four ‘C’ model) it labels and categorises with this concept, nevertheless (Kaufman and Beghetto 2009).

3.7 The Physicality of Creativity

Apart all the concepts and attempts to try to frame creativity, it is not to be denied, that *true* creativity following especially Maslow (1968) and Rogers (1954) in their thought of self-actualisation, always withholds a certain physicality. This very essential point is rarely mentioned in the the various academic definitions of it, what almost every paper about creativity tries to do in the beginning to frame a standing point. Creativity takes place in action, which is why the component of motivation is so essential to the realisation of creativity, yet no one mentions it by trying to frame it. It seems that the physical part of it is so inherent, that the academic characters overlook it.

I want to point out what is meant by the physicality of creativity. As described in the in Chapter 2 “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western Societies*”, by looking into the different research fields and their development over time the creative product and the process are always viewed as part of the creativity as a wide construct. To achieve the process and a product the physicalising of the thoughts and ideas is needed. On the one level it needs to be poured in a form, which is realisable in the world it should be created in, either if it is a sculpture, engineering thought of a new mathematics formula. All of the body of thought needs to be adjusted to the conditions provided by the environment. Find the right material, check if the form imagined is physically possible. At this point, the idea is put into action. It is to apply the idea to reality. Furthermore, not just the body of thought needs to be compositioned and applied, but also literally the physical body needs to start to move. From the moment of the idea, also called ‘creative spark’¹⁹, the person containing the spark, if the motivation is given, begins to physically move towards the goal, the creative product to physicalise the creativity and bring it into reality. So, not just the mental capacity of imagination and practical application of the body of thought is needed but also an actual bodily movement, by walking towards needed materials, touching them, moving the arms to paint or put them together. It means to become active, to create a directed movement from the motivation towards the physicality of creativity and its body. The creative process of decision making also holds a physical component, namely the location of the body of thought, where and when would the body of thought be placed. It is a question of placement in space and “succeeding upon fantasy and imagination is reality testing [...]” (1)43]maslow1968toward. Maslow’s (1968) attempt of self-actualisation creativity he expresses can be found the most obviously within improvisation. Within Improvisation, this physicality is very pure. The physicality lies also within the connection from the inside to the outside, which also needs first to be created and established (physically). Reckwitz (2013) describes especially in the context of small-c creativity or as he describes it, as a profane creativity which carries a very local and situational component.

19. The ‘Creational Spark’ is a term formulated here by Briksman (2009). It is to be understood as the starting point for the *flow* of creativeness and the whole creativity. The happening of the spark even though it can be influenced, provoked or even be stimulated by the environment, is something internally existent. Ivcevic located points of environmental influence, which can lead to the creative spark. The term can be compared to the ‘Eureka moment’, of having the solution for a to be solved problem (Ivcevic 2009).

This connection is throughout influenced by the aspects looked at above. Taoism and the psychological attempts by Maslow (1968), Rogers (1954) and Csíkszentmihályi (2004) all investigate this connection. It is about the individual being aware and in knowledge of this connection as well as being aware of the potential lying in being aware of this connection. Furthermore, becoming able to choose how to realise this connection of the inside and the outside, the space in which to realise the inside. When talking about physicality and environment and the physical connection, the creative domain of dance seems consequently to come to mind.

Yet, it seems so obvious that the body and the physicality of creativity is the one of the most important aspects, the artistic medium for the body in dance is in this connection not highly frequented looked at. In all of Csíkszentmihályi's interviews not one of the interviewed happens to be a dancer (Morris 2005).

4 From Theory to Practice, Self-Actualisation and the Phenomenon of Creativity in the Context of the Medium of Dance

4.1 A Brief History of Contemporary Dance

As in the previous chapter, “Culturally Diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity”, the historical framework for dance is written and viewed from a European-centred perspective. This chapter will concentrate on how the culture of dance entered *Western* and European culture. As a time frame, it is a view taken from the 19th Century onward. In this time also the institutionalised movement of academia arose, which is relevant as an event for the way dance is understood and expressed also today and described in details in Chapter 2 “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies” of this work.

The topics of dance and creativity are viewed from two perspectives in academia in their relation: Firstly, the creativity which arises by doing dance and the creative force within the practice of dance. Secondly, dance as a tool to make creativity visible and be able to investigate it and bring its aspects to forth.

The expression of dance and the contained creativity has, in a certain way, a unique relation. The expression in art generally is the most significant domain one thinks of when thinking about creativity. Yet, the sub-domain of dance differs from other art forms. It allows creativity to become visible because of its very momentous nature.

4.2 Dance, Creativity and the Transformation over Time

The understanding of dance as a domain and a dynamic object or object of research is quite young, as is the research of creativity. The first perception of it as art and establishing an art domain for it within the higher culture happened at the beginning of the 20th Century. The purpose of dance, up to then, fulfilled a training-function for women’s posture and practice

of a gracile attitude, located in the domain of women education (Press and Warburton 2007). Thereby, one can draw the consequence of dance mainly being produced for the recipient's view and its function is being read as aesthetic and pretty such as the women had to be who executed it. So, it was more considered as an aesthetic tool, than an individual creational domain itself. From here, dance was picked up to improve physical health and considered as a sportive activity (Press and Warburton 2007). This perception was changed by Gertrude Colby (1922). She transformed dance as the first one from exclusively an aesthetic tool to a 'Natural Dance' approach. This was created as a pedagogical tool to enhance children's creativity mainly in music education. In her profession as a school teacher, she searched for something besides the very aesthetic focused physical practices, other than clean and prescribed dance moves as in social dances. 'Natural Dance' embraced movements that contained the feeling of the movement everyone goes through at one's birth. The main difference lay in the creation of dance not as steps but as movements and ideas (Spiesman 1960). H'Doubler (1957) included other fields of research and knowledge in teaching and practising dance. She taught aspects of anatomy, philosophy, and chemistry about dance and took the ground-breaking approach of movement vesting the human body into nature (Press and Warburton 2007). For the first time, dance was understood as an expression of meaning in itself and included all bodily movements including organs or muscle contraction (Spiesman 1960).

From the 1930s, the dance started to include and position itself towards politics and took in different cultural points-of-view. By considering other styles, the centric-White-*Western*-perception thereby opened itself to more diverse ways of meaning and function of dance. This new input led to the collaboration of multicultural choreographers and shifted the focus towards the meaning and the expression for the content of dance (Press and Warburton 2007). Unlike the former approach which focused on the outside view of an external *pretty* appearance and form of dance, the new approach includes the tendency of dance as it is understood today, which draws its creative energy from within. Taking the internal perspective rather than the external view from the observer. This also can be witnessed in ballet: the oldest classical form of dance. Ballet is a completely artificial way of moving and dancing, leaving narrow gaps for one's expression within the strict form and mandatory

sense of aesthetic.

The 1980s was the next period to see a shift in dance form. Attempts were made to create new content and form, and consciously challenge the already existing by playing with it. Dance practice and invention gained a very identity-driven character. A new approach also in teaching was, rather than communicating a certain way how to move, to teach a certain way of understanding space. It offered a certain perspective alongside key movements containing this perspective and *understanding* rather than expecting an explicit form of execution. In the 1980s a performer and dancer called Ohad Naharin started his career as a choreographer and established over time a dance-form, called ‘Gaga’. Rather than teaching and trying to capture a look of dance, he tries to communicate a feeling of space (Galili 2015). The choreographer tries to hand on his or her perception of body and space and bring an existential dimension to dance and dance creation “as an expressive symbol system for communicating personal experience [...]” (Press and Warburton 2007, 1278). For other cultures, this interpretation, meaning, and usage of dance are not new. Morris (2005) states that dance is, by being done, always also already performed. It is thus independent of the audience receiving it or even judging it.

Apart from a Eurocentric view, dance appeared from the beginning of human societies in diverse cultures. There, the meaning and function of dance took a different role as it is described earlier in this text. As referred to already in Chapter 3 “Culturally Diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity”, the reading, and communication through and of the dance differ consequently, according to the group, society or culture, it is performed by. In some cultures, dances are connected very closely to nature and can e.g. motivate the weather to bring rain (Morris 2005). Fortunately, the Contemporary Dance approaches are on the one hand produced by a very diverse global community, bringing multiple (cultural) and personal perspectives into the professional dance community. On the other hand, the research of movements tries to not classify into good or bad. It tries to strive for a universal interest from all included cultures towards each other, with no hegemonic understanding of each other to investigate every possibility.

4.3 Dance in Academic Research and its Connection to Creativity Research

Moving away from the connection and relation between dance and creativity, dance as an object of research itself was not paid attention to until lately. Beginning with a new perception of dance itself, it gained popularity at the start of the 1980s.

As a research object, it raised questions about the motivation for the creation of choreographies and dance itself. The psychological perspective emphasised motivation as a central part of the realisation of creativity. In various texts and also expressed by Press and Warburton (2007) it is termed as ‘putting an idea into form’. This wording is very visually executed in the medium of dance and has a very direct transfer.

Generally, the research of creativity in dance focuses on important choreographers and dancers. Morris (2005) critically states that dance is one of the most eluded art forms for academia. Furthermore, it lacks a directed investigation of the phenomena of creativity in the field of dance. As stated before, it happens that in Csíkszentmihályi’s work on *flow* that not one of the interviewees as creatives happened to be a dancer or choreographer (Morris 2005).

The unique feature of dance in the context of creativity, which emerges and expresses itself in dance, is the balance of conceptualising and producing at the same time since “[t]he nature of dance creativity [...] in some sense enjoys making meaning immediately embodied in an original ‘something’. It is a skill that can be learned as a balance of imagination and analysis to produce ‘something’ [...]” (Press and Warburton 2007, 1273).

Following this statement, the expression of creativity in and through dance carries an especially directly execution. Both creativity and dance carry a strongly physical character of realising themselves. When a painter expresses creativity in a picture, the physical execution of the creativity lies within movements of taking the brush, moving it, sitting or standing in front of the canvas, adapting to the structure of items that are used, and results in the creative product of the picture. Within dance, this physicality is the creative product. In theory, creativity is often divided into the doing of something as being the practice, expression or

process of creativity and the phenomenon of creativity itself. It can be assumed, from this point of view, that in dance these stations of creativity or maybe also in this context, *the experience of flow* are condensed within the movement of dance. Hence, dance incarnates a very physical directness connected to the core of creativity. Press and Warburton (2007) states that it is not possible to undertake a movement without motivation to be there. So, up to a certain extent, the movement is the visual motivation.

The motivation can be seen as the energy-giver or the drive to realise an idea or a creative spark. Considering the creative process as being a process of decision making, motivation can be the force for this path of decision making. Yet, the place from where the spark eludes or emerges seems to be closely bonded to the place from where the motivation arises, it still takes places elsewhere.

At this point, it is interesting to take a look at a certain description that is repetitively used to refer to the very essence or origin of creativity. Pope (2005), amongst others, mentions an independent ‘*it*’. This term recurrently refers to creativity also in other contemporary research on creativity in academia. Pope (2005) emphasises *it* as also being part of Buddhism and Taoism, where an independent *it* exists from the human understanding of objects. It almost represents a realist understanding of creativity. Press and Warburton (2007) mention *it* as well, when they state that “in dance, if it moves you, then there is a good chance that something new is being created [...]”. They also raise the question of “what pulls us to dance?” (1273).

The question of ‘what pulls us to dance?’ becomes very central by taking these considerations into account aiming to move towards an understanding of creativity and the seemingly mystical *it*. The choice of the word pull by Press and Warburton (2007) is important at this point: *it* indicates something that pulls us. In the beginning, there is the so-called *it*, which needs to be investigated. When Csíkszentmihályi talks about the *experience of flow*, it describes the phenomenon of *something* pulling, driving, or moving one to do something, or even creating out of *itself*. Also, Morris (2005) states that creativity performs *itself* on a daily life basis. To understand this aspect, it makes sense to look again at alternative expressions and understandings of creativity than the *Western* one. What sounds so abstract for the very rational attempts towards creativity from academia, occurs in other cultures as embedded and

self-evident. In many American Native cultures, a word for the concept of the execution of art does not even exist, since it is so naturally part of life, known and ingrained and accessible to everyone (Morris 2005). Also, the study by Maduros looks at Indian painters and their execution of creativity provides a very strong example for *the something* or *it* (Sternberg 1999). They are led by a greater whole where creativity realises *itself* through the artist. They are, in a romantic manner, led by *something* or *inspired* from *it* to create. Connecting these aspects to the academic research of creativity and the medium of dance, Press and Warburton (2007, 1281) summarise the academic purpose of creativity research: “What theory can tie together is the history of dance as a piece of domain knowledge, the evidence for a ‘dancing-self’ at the core of creative acts of meaning [...]”.

Dance is almost the creative spark, the motivation in the form of realising energy and the creative product in almost one moment. Like an imprint, it can uncover and refer to creativity *itself*. The body carries a natural knowledge of all relevant factors of the creative process such as the self, others, physical environments and “the expressive nature of embodied symbolic systems [...]” (Press and Warburton 2007, 1282). In the last chapter “Culturally Diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity” was taken a view on alternative approaches and perspectives on creativity and the aspects of it. Taking these arguments into account, consequently, it is an utmost necessity to investigate creativity in the context of dance and the *dancing-self*.

4.4 The *Dancing-Self*: Losing Space and Time

The concept of *flow* understands the direct response of an individual to its environment while being in action (Csíkszentmihályi 2004). In Csíkszentmihályi’s (2004) interviews, the state of *flow* is described as being when one’s ego steps back and it almost feels as if the creative person does not act by him or herself. It takes place without conscious knowledge or intention: “And [the music] just flows out of itself [...]” (Csíkszentmihályi 2004). It almost feels like a rush for the creating person. Here, one can draw the line to the study taken with Indian painters, describing the state of being or rather non-being, when drawing. Here as well the creative object realises *itself* through the artist. When H’Doubler (1957) speaks from

dance and its ‘life force’ which moves one, she describes it as a moment of an establishment of a bridge of one’s internal to the external world. In her understanding, it is a human need to communicate the internal world of feelings to the outside world. If this is not executed “every high-strung emotional state which has not found its appropriate expression causes movement by which we instinctively try to get rid of the feeling of restraint [...]” (H’Doubler 1957, 51).

There is *something* that needs to be expressed. It naturally frees *itself* to express *itself*. As in H’Doubler’s idea of ‘life force’. Press and Warburton (2007) further note as a comment on the *dancing-self*, that from this state something new can be resulted “a new neuronal connection, a new relationship, a new freedom in body and mind [...]”. This links very well with Rogers (1954) and Maslow’s (1962) attempts on personal growth. Also, Rogers’ (1954) describes the motivation for creativity as a satisfying feeling for the individual, since it allows the individual to realise his or her potentialities of being. He even claims that the relationship between the individual and its environment is the creative product itself. A similar attempt can be found in the early 1980s and the new understanding of teaching dance. Within this time, personal growth was understood as equally important to learning dance itself. As in self-actualisation, in dance, the dancing person realises her or his body apart from social conviction of movements.

4.5 Space and Time in the *the Experience of Flow* in the Context of Dance

As Press and Warburton (2007) describe it, a new space opens up to the creative person after being moved by the *dancing-self*. In consequence, talking again about the physicality of creativity, it can be brought into a connection of the perception of space and time. As Csíkszentmihályi (2004) finds in his interviews, many people within the state of *flow*, experience the time differently or even completely forget about it, such as forgetting to eat. Interviewees experienced a state of awareness and openness towards the complexity of the environment in all its facets. This openness leads the person towards ‘extentionalities’ of the self, which enables them to grasp the variety of reality. It can be understood as a move beyond oneself to stretch and grow into the space of reality ‘as it is’.

Since the dancer is very aware of the aspects of the self, the environment and the bridge he or she establishes between the two, it is possible to manipulate this space of this connection. By being very aware of the interrelation of the body –from where the creation is evolving – and the environment, the dancer can channel through this connection and filter the information they want to be influenced by (Press and Warburton 2007).

The dancer is aware of the process of establishing the movements and the movement itself in executing them, as well as environmental factors that influence and inspire the movements of the body. In practice, it includes even the movement of organs and the skeleton (H'Doubler 1957). It meets very much Csíkszentmihályi's (2004) description of *the experience of flow* as moment of responding to the environment while being in action and here being aware of it. The awareness hands here the skill needed to interact with the 'challenges' of the environment and create a balance in and with it. As Maslow (1968) stated, the likelihood of creativity taking place is higher by self-awareness towards oneself and the relation to the environment. Also, in Tao, it is needed to release the ego and let happen what is already given and see the true form of objects or the individuals' environment, free from a filtered social or cultural context. Again: not just as a response but also as the result of the environment. The creative person steps back. In this ego-free state, it seems possible to express new freedom in body and mind (Kuo 1996). This given it can enable (the dancer) to manipulate reality, space and time. As an example, to describe the manipulation of the environment of space and time I quote a beautiful part of H'Doubler's book "Dance: A Creative Art Experience":

Living and moving as we do in a gravitational field, gravity is a force that constantly exerts an influence on our actions. We are not so conscious of it until there is a complete loss of control, which means giving up to gravity; and the action is characterised by a collapsing quality. Such a release of energy may occur instantaneously throughout the whole body, resulting in a collapsing fall, as in fainting; or only a single part or several parts may be so released. When one falls. However, the movement may involve some resistance at the start and then suddenly collapsing release; or it may offer some resistance throughout the falling movement, in which case there would be very little or no collapsing quality [...] (H'Doubler 1957, 83)

This quote was chosen as it expresses very accurately the physical feeling and state of awareness of body and environment for a dancer as well as the felt experience in a moment of dancing.

4.6 Dance-Creativity

Bringing ideas into reality means expressing creativity and pouring it into a real form. One can understand it in this context using the quote as an expression of ideas, streams of feelings and emotions into visible movements. For this described action, a catalyst is needed. One can assume that something provides for this act: an amount of energy to execute it. The motivation can be seen as the potent decision to act, but the action itself needs something unleashing to conduct it.

Pope (2005) refers to quantum mechanics as a metaphor. He notes that it takes energy to create matter from ‘nothing’ haptic. He applies the quantum theory to make the process as described above visual and approachable. As stated before, the idea of the necessity of *something* or also called *it* draws similarities to energy with the potential to transform or bring into being matter, as similar in quantum physics.

Furthermore, Pope (2005) elaborates that creativity exists as a material object and as a theoretical one. As before mentioned by Press and Warburton (2007) and Morris (2005) the theoretical concepts created to make creativity visible or measurable are not creativity itself. Morris (2005) refers to the context of dance to creativity as a ‘flow of energy’ in and around the body. He names different *Eastern* attempts of medical procedures, to work with this understanding of energy, such as in acupuncture or mediation. Furthermore, he states that these attempts find increasingly their way into *Western* medicine. For example, Tai Chi as a martial art, which is completely based on the flow of energy in and around the body and goes the translation of ‘life force’. This term can be found over and over in H’Doubler’s book “Dance: A Creative Art Experience”. She claims that this ‘life force’ is given to us when being born and motivates us to move within life. Continuing her quote stated above of the body being naturally connected in its (re)actions to the inner state of the person, by the means of feelings and emotions she writes about the ‘life force’ that “[t]his inner force or motive power that drives us in the life of our choosing, resides in that complex centre which perceives, thinks, reasons, comprehends, remembers, imagines, and creates – the centre we call to mind” (70).

Going back to *Eastern* attempts towards defining creativity, as well as Rogers’ (1954)

and Maslow's (1968) attempt, the mind can be actively used and trained through the tool of awareness about the mind itself and the environment and its connection. As in Tao, everything is about the connection and the understanding of the mind and the environment and the interrelation. Further, she states that "[l]ife, in all its forms, is a manifestation of quickening force sensed as energy. Coexistence with this force, and regulating its flow, is the phenomenon of rhythm [...] Its presence is revealed in the life patterns and forms of all organic [...]" (H'Doubler 1957, 161). Csíkszentmihályi (2014) found that the individual's balance of challenge and skill in the right environmental conditions of a task is conditional for *the experience of flow*. The expression 'go with the flow' is popularly known. In the "Oxford Dictionary", it is described as "be relaxed and accept a situation, rather than trying to alter or control it [...]" ("Definition of 'flow' in English" 2019). To achieve this state, the individual is more likely to endure this state by being aware of its factors, or even by being able to take influence on them in his or her own liking that can be understood in the context of dance as manipulation. This manipulation can take place if the individual is aware of his or her environment as well as being capable of dealing with it. Also, the approach of Tao can help to achieve this balance of relevant factors in the creativity process. The ability to receive one's environment without the filters of e.g. culture and ego alters the possibility to react more competently to one's environment (Rogers 1954). In the context of a dancer especially, these factors are physically relevant. If the dancer wants to use gravity for his or her movements, picking up on H'Doubler's (1957) quote, the dancer must be aware of his or her actual body structure, weight and the dynamics and forces of gravity upon this. If this understanding is filtered with a wrong estimation in this interrelation, the dancer will fall in a risky way with the potential to be hurt.

Based on this awareness, the dancer can manipulate the space as described above. Within this expression through manipulation of H'Doubler's (1957) lies the meaning of dance. She understands that dance contains two layers of creativity: the form and movements on one hand, and on the other hand, the meaning given to it. Similar to Tao, this process can be understood to be built organically as "Tao creates One; One creates Two; Two creates Three: out of Three, All things are created [...]" (Kuo 1996, 205). Press and Warburton (2007) furthermore state that "as a craftsman, the dancer may construct a sequence of movements, but as an artist, he creates an organic entity [...]". The characteristic of organicity seems to be

crucial for the perspectives onto creativity, which were discussed previously. Calling back to mind the *Western* academic definition of being novel and appropriate, one can tie the string of organic being novel but in a circular understanding of maybe renewing and appropriate because an organic object always embeds itself into the system surrounding it.

4.7 Connecting the Points of Arguments and Locating them in the Structure of the Work

The second chapter “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies” framed what creativity is and how it can occur by looking at it from diverse angles in disciplines and cultures. This step clearly indicates that the understanding of creativity can be seen from two sides, firstly, the construct of it and the experienced, and secondly, the performed human phenomena. Chapter 3 “Culturally diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity” investigated the tools used and attempts being executed and researched in a recorded manner of entering the experience of creativity from diverse perspectives. This chapter tried so far to capture the phenomena itself and make it visible. It uses the art form of dance to emphasise the physical component of creativity. So, how can this eluding phenomenon be brought to forth?

At this point, it is constructive to take a look at Maslow’s (1968) work about self-actualisation and creativity, where he states that creativity, as he describes it, can be found the most likely in improvisation.

In this context again, it is important to look at Press and Warburton (2007) question of ‘What pulls us to dance?’. Looking at the development of dance in the 1980s the focus of attention shifted from one which was orientated to the outer form and its aesthetic, and arrive at the observer towards one “from the inside out [...]” (Press and Warburton 2007, 1278). Press and Warburton (2007) take it further and say there is no movement without motivation (Press and Warburton 2007). Looking at Chapter 2 “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies”, we know that motivation is one of the most essential aspects of the realisation of creativity. In the context of dance, this attempt can be applied as the creativity, also the something, it or the energy is poured instantly in its final form of the creative product

in being executed. Furthermore, these movements which form the creative product cannot come into being without motivation for and in it. Consequently, one can raise the question if the occurrence of an inner creative thought or in its global body of thought or also the spark of creativity and its motivation to execute it take place simultaneously in the doing of dance? Consistently, dance seems to carry a certain density of the different components of the academic understanding of creativity – from the beginning of the process what can be marked as the rise of the first thought up to the creative final product. One can assume that this quality of density carries the potential to approach the creativity in its very true nature. It offers to bring it into the forth.

Csikszentmihályi (2014) brought up the concept of *flow* which understands the direct response of an individual with its environment while being in action. So, what brings us to action, what makes us move towards or into a creative product?

In the context of dance H'Doubler (1957) calls it 'life force' and Press and Warburton (2007) call it the *dancing-self*. Lubart and Georgsdottir (2004) describe the character of creativity in Samoan dance by quoting Colligan (1983). This dance does not invent new steps but tries as original as possible to re-perform when “[c]reativity occurs in minute changes on the surface level because the culture allows and rewards it on that level [...]” (Sternberg 1999, 343).

Similar to H'Doubler's attempts of two layers of creativity within dance as form and meaning, this quote implies that creativity also here lies within the second layer of executing it. It is not the inventive part of creating steps but the meaning which is given to it – the energy poured into the doing.

4.8 Improvisation

One can raise the question after reading these chapters: how do these theories connect, why are they described so in such a detailed way? Montuori (2003) wrote an essay on improvisation and creativity. He states that one explanation for the difficulty of grasping the phenomena of creativity could be located in a very binary understanding of the world we have nowadays. The dichotomy of paradoxes does not meet the universal reality of the information provided by the environment. The *Eastern* theories and approaches and their

practice of creativity, which were taken into account, try to acknowledge and meet this difficulty. All of the described theories try to approach the phenomenon of creativity from dynamic and divers' angles – until finding the right. In life, we are asked daily to improvise. It is an ability and natural tool to deal with and react to our environment (Montuori 2003). Improvisation is a very direct way of realising a body of thought. It is not the only way for creativity to occur organically, but maybe a very close and visual execution of it. Contrary to the *Western* approach of trying to fit creativity into already pre-shaped understandings, tradition, and concepts, the *Eastern* view approaches it very openly. Montuori (2003) argues that in the 18th Century the act of improvisation [in music] was repressed by the concept of the *genius*. Here, it is referred to as the 'genius composer'. Not just the improvisation in performance faded but also the potential to approach the topic of creativity through the tool of improvisation and its patterns. To approach a phenomenon as creativity, Montuori (2003) claims that a global view is needed apart from a binary thinking structure. He calls it in this context of 'thinking together' and understands in the tool of improvisation the possibility to draw closer to creativity (250).

Creativity and improvisation might therefore be said to serve at least a dual role. They allow us to adapt to complex environments in our own ways, and they allow us to express our (inner) complexities through the performance of our interactions with the world. The concept of improvisation is, I believe, crucial to the existential reality of complexity [...] (241)

As a prominent example of improvisation and the application of an approach of thinking together can be seen in Jazz. In Jazz improvisation, a blending is happening, which binds past, present and future together and enables and opens up to all present channels to put out and realise the creative spark. It can be understood as an unconscious outflow of resources (Mendonça and Wallace 2004). In "Cognition in Jazz Improvisation: An Exploratory Study", Wallace and Mendonça (2004) describe improvisation as a direct satisfaction for realising creativity for the individual. It manipulates the space of time in binding past, present, and future by the means of relying on rituals and traditions and at the same time being open to any changes coming into practice (Montuori 2003). This takes place while being constantly in interaction with the present space and moment by being performed in front of an audience. The performer or producers of creative energy can even be uplifted by receiving feedback and be able to transform and create something new. Fischer-Lichte (2004) states that feedback is

crucial for the change or transformation of conditions. What comes after Rogers (1954) and Maslow (1968) is to develop a tool for creativity *toflow*. The uniqueness of improvisation yet lies within the participation of the participant in her or his experience of creativity because “[i]t is the invoking peak of experiences within the real-time collective format, where musical ideas generated by artists and perceived by listeners simultaneously [...]” (Sarath 2013, 207).

In Jazz-music, the musicians have a similar state of releasing the ego, as described in Csikszentmihályi’s (2004) interviews of *the flow experience*. The musicians do not attend so much to the technique and formal aspects but “let go of conscious concerns for them during the performance [...]” (Csikszentmihályi 2004).

4.9 Improvisation in Dance and the Creativity Aspect in It

In the context of dance, the aspect of losing ‘conscious concerns’ is very strongly expressed in Contact Dance. Contact Dance was established and developed from the movements of experimental dance. In 1972 Steve Paxton investigated the body’s movement in pairing. While being in motion two dancers keep a constant connection. It takes a high awareness for and with the other partner and space. Taking it further, Contact Dance is not just possible between two individuals but also possible between human and a landscape, spaces, and environments.

When we started, we didn’t know what we were making or where precisely it was going. We had to leave room for its organic development rather than where we wanted it to go [...] CI is primary between two people who remain in touch but dance independently, creating a third entity between them. This third entity is CI [...] (Pallant 2006, 10)

Using the form of Contact Dance, some dance styles build their characters on improvisation. Dance experienced an important turning point entering the 1960’s with all the cultural changes. Improvisation became significantly relevant for dance from here onwards. Contact Dance fulfils generally two functions within the domain of dance: it is a tool for the creation of steps for dance and in the choreographic work of dance. On the other hand, it is an experience for the individual itself sometimes also taking place in a performance shared with an audience. In the second function, it is very similar to the quote of Mendonça and Wallace (2004) to the

performative feeling of a collective experienced moment of improvisation. In the context of dance and improvisation, Morris (2005) refers to dancers and choreographers of experimental dance and Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi (2014) taking the approach of transpersonality into account. Morris states that “[i]t may be that the process involves an interplay of conscious and pre-conscious cognitive factors, as well as an informative awareness extending beyond the individual to connect with an universal creative state [...]” (Morris 2005, 95). Following Morris (2005) and Maslow (1962), improvisation is the closest action towards creativity and the most accessible since it can take place in the smallest facets of ones every-day life. In this state of improvisation, one needs to make decisions which come from a deeper awareness than rational thoughts. Morris (2005, 93) describes it as “willing to wait for a deeper impulse, and open to risking the unknown [...]” . He claims that within improvisation a connection takes place to a universal creative state.

In her article “Between Minds and Bodies: Some Insights about Creativity from Dance Improvisation” , Lucznik (2015) describes a study executed to observe the collaboration of dancers in their creative activities. She criticises the current theoretical attempts towards creativity of having an essence which majorly or even just lies within cognitive processes. She states that, for her study, she considers the process of creativity as lying in the execution of it since creativity occurs or multiplies also often during the moments of creation in the work. Furthermore, she emphasises that the dancer’s body is, within the context of dance, to be considered the same as, for example, the mind in the approaches of divergent thinking. The body in this context can be seen as a tool and as a medium for the expression and execution of creativity. The streams of thought and the movements of the dancer have not set up different stations in the creative process – they can be seen as equivalent (Lucznik 2015). Furthermore, “[t]he ideas appear not in solitary minds, but rather they appear from interactions of mind and body, of body’s disposition and ideas in the mind, from interaction with surroundings, objects, and gravity, and with each other’s bodies [...]” (302).

The existence of the Contemporary Dance attempts to challenge the classical and contemporary approaches towards creativity from a psychological and sociocultural point of view. The body and senses think, they create (themselves), they imagine. Lucznik draws from these statements that the presence of the dancer “is a result of this imagining in real-

time [...]” (Lucznik 2015, 302). Dance is a tool to give (visual) description and language to the phenomenon so elusive as creativity in academia, which eludes from a systematic and analytic perspective.

This study points out very well the lack of academia in the way of how creativity is researched. As mentioned before the physicality of creativity is the core aspect of bringing something ‘from inside out’ to use Press and Warburton (2007) words.

5 Methodology –Presenting the Case Study

Creativity Studies can be investigated from diverse theoretical approaches as well as methodological ones such as psychometric, biometric, historiometric or mystical perspectives (Sternberg 1999). All these diverse approaches allow different disciplines and academic fields to examine and analyse the phenomena of creativity. Particularly, the neuro-scientific field entered the debate around the occurrence and form of creativity. How do Culture Studies become indispensable from creativity and, indeed, necessary to its' study? It may be the nature of the discipline to employ a confluence of different approaches which makes it suitable to best capture the vast topic of creativity. By embracing multiple perspectives, the vast characters and features of the topic of creativity can be highlighted in turn. A confluence approach involves merging diverse disciplines, and in each individually inquired discipline, different aspects of the topic can be studied more specifically through use of more relevant instruments. Using this manifold approach, Culture Studies can explore the topic of creativity from a more global perspective (Hananberg 2018). Culture Studies, by enlightening new fields and refreshing existing perspectives about a topic, may therefore transform an already existing debate into something new (Said, 1978). It may be used to make visible what could not be viewed through the cultural experience within the current society. In a survey about the qualitative and quantitative attempts taken to investigate the topic of creativity, Wehner, Csikszentmihalyi, and Magyari-Beck (1991) state the significance of using a confluence approach by comparing it with the fable below:

As in the fable of the blind men and the elephant, we touch different parts of the same beast and derive disorted pictures of the whole from what we know. 'The elephant is like a snake', says the one who only holds its tail; 'The elephant is like a wall', says the one who touches its flanks [...] (Wehner, Csikszentmihalyi, and Magyari-Beck 1991, 270)

5.1 Theoretical Foundation and Construction of the Survey Instrument

Montuori (2003) states in his essay on creativity and improvisation that to understand the complexity of the phenomena of creativity we need to change the way we think. In general, academia assumes a scholar to have such a rational and non-emotional character to be able to take an objective perspective towards the topic under investigation, and to look for results based on perceivable evidence. However, as Chapter 2 “Culturally diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity” points out, it has shown that these results cannot be understood from a single, classic, binary academic perspective. It is essential to not employ research structures which break down complex phenomena into binary thinking structures, and eliminate the very essence of creativity itself. Thus, one needs to look for tools which embrace the complex nature of creativity from multiverse dimensions. Consequently, it is not easy to capture from a classical (*Western*) perspective of academia, a concept as complex as creativity (Montuori 2003). It is also useful to understand that it is impossible for any investigation to be totally objective, as what is experienced by each individual person is so intimately and subjectively perceived. Consequently, this study focuses on investigating creativity from one’s own experience, in a similar way to how Chapter 3, “From Theory to Practice, Self- Actualisation and the Phenomenon of Creativity in the Context of the Medium Dance” explains creativity as a self-expression.

Press and Warburton (2007) amongst others repetitively state that creativity most likely comes to fore by taking a hyper-personal and subjective approach (Sternberg 2006), (Press and Warburton 2007), (Montuori 2003), (Morris 2005). Press and Warburton (2007) express the contradiction of personal expression and growth versus an analytic investigation of academia. As already examined in Chapter 2 “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies”, the structures and tools of academia only skim the surface of creativity and it needs to be further investigated. Taking the practice of Tao into consideration, it can be proposed that the field needs to lose in order to find again and *see*. It seems that the topic of creativity needs to be investigated in domains and with subjects which have never come into connection with the academic concept of creativity. For example as

[w]e social scientists would do well to hold back our eagerness to control that world which we so imperfectly understand. The fact of our imperfect understanding should not be allowed to feed our anxiety and so increase the need to control. Rather, our studies could be inspired by a more ancient, but less honoured motive: a curiosity about the world of which we are part. The reward of such work not power but beauty [...] (Montuori 2003, 269)

Also, H'Doubler (1957), similar to Press and Warburton (2007), points out that academia can serve to give an insight into the “actual quantitative aspects of experience [...]” (H'Doubler 1957, xxvi). Yet, they will not be able to bring forth the profound part of experiencing, e.g. creativity, or feelings, one of the energy-giving forces which lead to creativity expression and intuition. She suggests that “[t]hese are the qualitative considerations of experience. Although intangible, they have a reality of their own and exist as powerful and necessary drives to compel us to action [...]” (xxvi).

Gruber and Wallace (1999) state that in creativity research there is a close relationship between theory and method. The choice of method assumes an underlying theory to a certain extent and shapes what is considered to be worthy of being studied. Furthermore, they emphasise that certain knowledge about the creative domain or the creative product by the scientist is needed for them to focus on it. In this context, the relationship between the scientist and the object of research can be referred to Morin's idea of *self-eco-organisation* (Montuori 2003). According to Morin, the knowledge of a person and the knower (*self*) are always situated in the same context (*eco*), which carries in itself always the already embedded knowledge from this environment (*organisation*) Montuori. Montuori (2003) applies Morin's concept of *self-eco-organisation* knowledge into his research of creativity and calls for the acknowledgement of the always personal and subjective perspectives embedded in scientific researches and suggests to make the subjectivities transparent. On the other hand, Gruber and Wallace (1999) promote very strongly a qualitative and detailed analysis of cases in which creativity is assumed. With relevance to this study, both the concept of *self-eco-organisation* and the use of qualitative methods will be used to conduct the Case Analyses.

5.2 The Case Study Approach

Referring to the Case Study approach towards creativity, Gruber and Wallace (1999) name two roles the researcher plays: first, a phenomenological one; and second, a critical one. Playing the phenomenological role, the researcher tries to get as close as possible to the creative subject and follows the experience this creative individual went through. On the other hand, as a critical role, the researcher tries to gather data from their responses and interactions and analyse them. In Wallace's and Gruber's opinion, it is the interplay of these two roles which will help the researcher to qualify the research topic of creativity in the case studies (Gruber and Wallace 1999).

In general, Case Studies centred around the topic of creativity offer a perspective or an approach to the phenomena not only through adapting existing methodologies but also by containing common practices as samples of detailed analysis, where suitable narrative descriptions are derived. The methodological tool in this study will be developed following Gruber's and Wallace's approach of the Evolving System (Gruber and Wallace 1999). This approach follows the belief that the creative person is unique and sees the creative person, group or culture as an Evolving System. The Evolving System approach looks at the internal elements of creativity and also its external milieu. The approach holds against predictability and control. As Sternberg contends, "the necessary uniqueness of the creative person argues against efforts to reduce psychological description to a fixed set of dimensions" (Sternberg 2006, 93). This methodology is never simply about measurement and its instruments but expresses the researcher's underlying belief system of knowledge and truth. Within this approach, creativity is seen to arise from the need of compatibility with human purposes and with the society and culture in which the research takes place.

Aside from common methods which use, for example, divergent-thinking as an indicator of creativity, it is generally not likely that a psychometric perspective can tell apart the qualitative aspects of creativity, which happen to be more generative than just deriving solutions for a problem-solving situation. The factor of creativity should be considered idiosyncratically by looking at the creative strategy each person develops rather than as pre-designed traits to qualify their actions. In Creativity Studies, method and theory go hand in

hand. In this way, the theory is the method and the other way around. The Gestalt approach does not try to measure but to understand the structure of the situation, from which the subjects will not be confronted and transformed by a series of “analogous to perfectional phenomena [...]” (95). In this approach, the researcher concentrates on finding structure by being within the situation, rather than observing from the outside, and by perceiving the subject “straight from the heart of the thinker to the heart of its object, of his problem [...]” (Sternberg 1999, 96). It is not about finding an explicit solution to a problem, but the process of getting there and focusing on the performing individual. As such, Montuori (2003) offers improvisation as a tool to react to information and brings structure into creative situations, which is based on the idea that “the necessary uniqueness of the creative person argues against efforts to reduce psychological description to a fixed set of dimensions” (93).

5.3 Concept of the Study

Within the framework and approach of the Case Study of Wallace and Gruber, a platform for investigating needs to be developed. In the Case Study by Wallace and Gruber, people deemed to be creative throughout history, such as Newton, Einstein, etc. were investigated. They studied their notes and tried to work on the insides of the minds from these samples. This process was developed in order to understand the patterns of thoughts and ways of working which would likely lead to creative genius (Gruber and Wallace 1999). All the people chosen as part of the sample are highly notable and commonly held within cultural knowledge as being very inventive. However, the kind of creativity that is investigated in this attempt differs from the one that Wallace and Gruber observed. Besides the fact that the subjects of the sample of Wallace and Gruber are dead and cannot speak their mind anymore, the sample is also very one dimensional in terms of gender and ethnic background, and relies very much on the critique expressed in the second Chapter, “The Beginning of the Domain within the Academia of *Western* Societies”, on filtering creativity by social and cultural standards of that time. Representing contemporary understanding, this work aims to capture creativity in a more diversified sample at the very moment of its expression and execution.

Therefore, the Case Study approach of Wallace and Gruber will not be replicated completely

but will inform the current study in terms of its understanding of the observed. This attempt grows organically with and through observations of the creative subject and tries to find and analyse results after gathering data and not before. Another element from Wallace's and Gruber's approach which has been taken as inspiration is the respect towards the creative individual as a dynamic person shaped by its environment. Therefore, this study concentrates very much on a momentous point, the *medias res* of creativity.

Also, the two roles of the investigator will be taken into consideration during the process of data gathering (Gruber and Wallace 1999).

5.4 Role of the Investigator – *Self-Eco-Organisation*

Following the theoretical approach of improvisation, the need for a detailed analysis and knowledge about the ways of problem-solving (creativity production), the present Case Study method will be organised based on a described situation of improvisation, and a qualitative guideline on the interview of the creative person.

Piaget interviewed children in 1936 in an attempt to make cognitive development visible (Flavel 1963). From this point of view, the Case Study will take improvisation as a methodological tool to demonstrate creativity. In the mystical approach, for example, one methodological tool happens to be the introspectable report to discover one's 'divine creativity'. Bernard (2007) writes in her essay on creativity research that the investigator's understanding of creativity will shape the methodological and theoretical approach towards the topic. She emphasises that research itself can be seen as creative. Consequently, this research follows in practice the theoretical attempts towards creativity in an organic and open-minded manner (Rogers 1954), (Maslow 1968), Kuo. The creativity in research lies within the investigator's decision of setting the starting point of inquiry and the endpoint of meaning-making in his or her research. In this work, the starting point of inquiry is born out of the personal experience of creativity in dance and its physical feeling and energy drive, which can be situated before the theoretical investigation of it. As an ending point, Bernard (2007) names meaning-making as the researcher collates theoretical attempts with gathered data. Here, it will be to compare the personal creativity experience of the researcher, as a dancer

herself, to other dancers, so as to find out whether thoughts, attempts, and experiences can be widened from a personal (*self*) experience to one which is vastly experienced in the field of dance (*eco*), and how this translates to a general cultural layer (*organisation*).

Yet, while creative experiences receive vaster attention in societies and diverse academic domains, dance and creativity rarely receive similar extent of attention (Bernard 2007).

This is in a similar way to Montuori (2003) and Bernard (2007) who ask to take a fresh look at creativity and its nature. This can be achieved by studying the topic through a new domain-lens. They highlight that to find a voice as the researcher allows us to re-think the common concept and understanding of creativity. Also, they offer an attempt to reconsider the academic writing of creativity itself and finding an artistic form to express one's understanding of it.

Runco and Sakamoto describe studies founded on the implementation of divergent thinking tests that the probands had had increased heart rates and described a feeling of warmth when being close to solving a task or a problem (Sternberg 1999). Within *the experience of flow* or the 'transpersonal' state, vigilance of the body is essential to a person and in the execution of inner creativity into reality (Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi 2014), (Morris 2005). These insights can be told and found through the framework of a Case Study leaning on Wallace's and Gruber's (1999) attempt. The practical part of this work carries three aspects of building the complete Case Study:

1. The Case Study as a framework for execution and analyse guidance of the study.
2. The platform and instrument chosen to investigate expressed creativity: improvisation.
3. The actual methodology to collect data: the qualitative interview realised with the video-SR.

The collected data from the Case Study will be placed within the developed theoretical framework to compare theoretical attempts and results of individual cases describing their understanding, experience, and execution of creativity.

Lucznik (2015) takes a similar approach in her Case Study on creative expressions in dance and collaboration of dancers. She uses improvisation as the laboratory of her study . She

emphasises that improvisation carries the possibility of showing “the process and the results of the creative process at the moment it is created [...]” (Łuczniak and Loesche 2017, 229). To further investigate the experience of the subjects, the study will conduct qualitative interviews with them to show “reliable data about introspection on processes [...]” (228).

5.5 Qualitative Interview

The methodological tool of a guided interview comes from the academic domain of empirical social researches and offers to observe a case by questioning people in a focused manner. The questions are formed by the to-be-observed phenomena, in this case, creativity. A guided interview can concentrate on two different attempts of investigation: first, to ask experts in their field to take a position onto the presented problem and second, to investigate opinions, perspectives, and positions towards the topic of investigation. These attempts are not able to be separated, and especially in this executed Case Study, which represents both expert and personal experiences and perspectives. The guided interview picks up onto several statements or questions developed from the theoretical framework to lead the content towards data which can validate or falsify theories and hypotheses (Diekmann 2007). As described before, the personal experience is the most valid and insightful data to bring forth the complexity of phenomena (Montuori 2003). The qualitative interview then serves significantly to qualify personal opinions and attitudes useful for this study. It is to be considered as a reactive survey method and one of the most common tools in social sciences to collect data. The execution of the qualitative interviews differ depending on the case of each interviewee. First of all, the medium of communication during the interview is one of the methodological decisions to be made for the later construction of the survey instrument, i.e., the questionnaire. It is possible to execute the interview by phone call, by just handing out the questionnaire or having a so-called face-to-face interview. Secondly, the degree of the structurability of the interview is another aspect influencing the effect and the results of the survey, for instance, an interview can be an open-ended one in which the data is collected through having a conversation-like situation. The techniques chosen for this survey are: first, a half-structured interview, also called a guided interview, and second, a completely structured interview in which the questions and the reply options will be categorised and set before the interview

takes place. These factors create different survey possibilities and are sensitive in the context of answering the question of research. They are designed with the acknowledgement that the methodological design can support the validity of results or weaken them if not logically and usefully applied (Diekmann 2007).

This survey will conduct the guided interview as mentioned through a face-to-face encounter. The reason for this lies within the idea that the specific question of research may be answered with more spaces of expressions. The guided interview will offer the possibility to describe a phenomenon as complex as the topic of creativity through providing enough space for the probands to express in the ways they want, and find words and domains of expressions for their experience while contained within the questions of the research. Furthermore, this technique allows spaces for ideas, opinions and thoughts the researcher had not considered beforehand, who will be taking the lead to orient the topic of research.

Often underestimated in interview situations is the artificial character of the subject. As a general critique of the interview as a survey instrument often contends, interviews do not offer the objectivity a research requires to create general statements from the results (Diekmann 2007). Yet as shown before, a personal and individual approach towards complex topics is assumed to bring more information to the fore than quantitatively or strongly predesigned techniques (Montuori 2003), (Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi 2014), (Press and Warburton 2007), (Morris 2005). Additionally, an open guided interview offers to gain information beyond the imagination of the researcher. Unlike what the critique of lack of objectivity stated above, interviews can be conducted in face-to-face contexts so as to overcome the non-natural feelings of a more distant situation in which questions are raised, such as in the cases of an exclusive questionnaire or a completely structured interview. On the other hand, a certain distance between interviewer and interviewee will always remain. This does not have to be necessarily a negative impact. As mentioned before in Wallace's and Gruber's Case Study attempts, they emphasise for the researcher to remain also in the role of the observer, who needs to analyse the gathered data. The natural distance of the interviewer and interviewee can offer this (Gruber and Wallace 1999). Diekmann (2007) emphasises that a truthful, honest and rich-in-substance reply is only possible if the cooperation of the interviewee, a norm of sincerity and a joint language of interviewer and interviewee

are given. In this Case Study, these factors are fostered by the researcher's background of being a dancer and knowledgeable about the use of the body and the occurrence of a certain feeling while performing and improvising. Wallace and Gruber (1999) have already been referenced as expecting the researcher to carry a certain set of knowledge of the field of creative expression: in this case, dance improvisation. When concerning a topic in which creativity appears in a complex and individual manner, it is particularly important to carry a common set of knowledge to perform clear communication and figure out observations of valid data. Researches in communication studies state that the possibility of misunderstanding information in interpersonal communication appears to be lower if the communicating individuals share more common points of reference in being , in this case, the art of performing dance (Dindas 2016).

5.6 Video-SR

As a methodological tool and support for the interviews on the short improvisation section of the Case Study, the "video-SR" is adapted in this study (video-SR). Lucznik (2015, 301) use it in the framework of a study which investigates "how people collaborate while creating [...]". The study concentrates on the process of creation under the impact of group interaction in dance and dance improvisation. Yet, this methodological component can also offer an inquiry within one's research and bring to forth the cognitive processes of the probands (Lyle 2003). In the video-SR, the proband is asked to perform the content of research, whichever this may be. During the performance, the researcher records the event with a video camera, and captures both the moving images and sounds. At this moment, it is already necessary to be mindful about the preferences laid in the selection of movements to be captured. The choices of angles, positions and perspectives have already framed literally how the content will be captured and presented afterwards. It is crucial to be aware of this additional media of communication fused within the interview, which can influence the laboratory situation and its output, and drives the kind of information gathered from the interview. Yet, the video-SR can offer a vast and clear image of the performed event and attain information closer to the intrinsic moments of execution by the proband than a questionnaire would (Lyle 2003). This method of the video-stimulated-recall took its first attempt in the mid of the 1980s. Video-

SR goes along with the procedure of ‘thinking aloud’, and allows the proband to retrieve a list of thoughts through writing. If choosing the first procedure the researcher can adjust and shift his questions towards the content of the proband and try to navigate it towards the topic of research. The proband can then ‘relive’ the experience and has time to reflect on the questions and the represented content unlike in a classical interview situation (Rowe 2009). Such questions may be constructed like, “[a]s you are watching your improvisation, try to narrate your conscious thinking, and consider questions like ‘[w]here was my awareness in that?’ (Łuczniak and Loesche 2017, 304).

As in the classical interview situation, the moment of the video-SR is either an organic one or holds the risk of discomfort for the proband, especially because of watching the video recording of oneself. It is advised to overcome this discomfort though allowing a moment for ‘giggling-time’. Also, it is also useful to first let the proband review the video material alone. However, with this later method, the direct and fresh response and the connection to the just produced experience may vanish (Rowe 2009).

5.7 Execution of the Study

The methodological design is divided into two parts:

- Firstly, the improvisation of the creative individual when dancing.
- Secondly, the qualitative guided interview evaluating the moment of creation by improvisation.

In the first part, three dancers will perform for three minutes in complete improvisation, which will be captured on video. Each dancer has two minutes in idle mode to enter into preparation prior to this three-minute documentation of the improvisation. In the second part, the creative individual will be shown the recording performed content in video and interviewed on this basis. The three-minute duration of improvisation is chosen based on the personal experience of the researcher as a dancer and choreographer, a duration which is challenging but not exhausting. The interview will be divided into two parts: the commenting on the observed situation and a general section to position themselves towards the given statements

about creativity and especially towards creativity itself from their own life experience so far. A system of analysing the materials will be developed following Wallace and Gruber's analytical framework. The student of the creative case needs to be bolt towards the available material (Sternberg 2006). After giving open comments on the video-content, the case subjects will be asked four questions in the semi-structured interviews. These questions can be adjusted according to the available situations as mentioned above. They may remain as the questions themselves, derive additional questions or be excluded selectively:

- Where does the energy for creativity come from?
- Where is the energy from creativity located (in the body)?
- How can one reach creativity?
- How does creativity feel?

5.8 Selections of Probands

The probands are professional dancers from a young dance company based in Bremen, Germany. The dance ensemble is called "Of Curious Nature" and is made up of in total ten dancers – all from different countries and of different backgrounds. This factor is very important to be emphasised. The different backgrounds offer a high level of cultural diversity and create the possibility for a more global knowledge-gathering. The ensemble is project-based, which means, in consequence, contracts dancers for a six-month period. The dancers were picked as probands on their voluntary wishes of contribution. The three dancers are similar in that they dance in the same ensemble and they all lie within an age range of less than 10 years apart: 23-30 years of age. In the following, the probands are introduced individually:

Einav Kringel is 23 years old and was born and raised in Israel. She has 10 years of dancing experience and she holds a degree from the "School for Arts" in Haifa, Israel. She took part in professional programs for dancers for two years and danced as a member of two companies in Israel. Since November 2019, she has been employed by the "Of Curious Nature" dance ensemble in Bremen, Germany.

Leila Bakhtali is 30 years old and was born and raised in the Netherlands. Her mother is

Dutch and her father is Suriname with bounds and roots to India. She was educated in the ‘Royal School of Ballet of Antwerp’ at the age of 11, continued dancing from there and has worked professionally as a dancer since the age of 21 in various companies. Also, she is employed by the dance ensemble “Of Curious Nature” in Bremen, Germany.

Albert Galindo Villegas is 25 years old and based in Barcelona, Spain. He started dancing at the age of 8 and was trained in ballet and modern techniques. He worked in Canada and Israel for different companies and has in total 6 years of professional dance experience. He is the third of the three probands, who is also employed in Bremen for the dance ensemble “Of Curious Nature”.

All of the probands are employed as professional dancers. Nowadays the term professional gains new meaning or is frowned upon. The Contemporary Dance scene experienced a lot of changes in terms of challenging the idea and concept of *professionality*. Important contributions firstly by Pina Bausch in the 1990s and following Sasha Waltz worked with dancers not coming from a professional dance background, yet by participating in a professional work, they have since become and been considered professionals. For this study, nevertheless, dancers chosen came from backgrounds of professional education in dance. For this very short and also artificial situation of the Case Study and the interview, it is necessary to at least reduce as many limitations and barriers as possible to have the most possible authentic outcome. Such limitations and barriers may include, for example, physical restriction in, firstly, ability of expression by skill, and secondly, by fitness. Also, barriers can appear not just on a physical level but also in the ability of physical expression of content, which can be rather seen as mental restrictions. By bringing professional skills and the experience of being asked to perform directly, these reducing factors can be partially eliminated.

5.9 The planned Implementation of the Case Study

On the day of the Case Study and the interview execution, I arrived after the company’s audition for a new piece. Before I arrived at the audition, the dancers had already been informed about the Case Study and my thesis. I entered the space when they were still busy

finishing the audition. Upon entering I was introduced by the choreographer Thomas Bühner, with whom I had initially established contact and who offered me to work with his dancers. We communicated via E-Mail and agreed on a date that fit both of us. The exchange was very easy, understanding and supportive. Whilst the dancers finished training, the included mediums were set up: 2 laptops and a smartphone. After a feedback round of the dance ensemble to close the audition session, I introduced myself and explained how I came into contact with Thomas Bühner. After this, a brief overview of the study was given: three minutes of improvisation and the following interview which was estimated to take in total 15 minutes per dancer. All of the present dancers were willing to take part in the study. Amongst the dancers, Leila had a deeper interest and emphasised that she wanted to take part in the Case Study out of personal curiosity. The other two dancers, Albert and Einav, stayed after agreeing with the remaining dancers, because they had the time for it. After this, it was clear who was willing to stay, I asked them to sit with me on the floor to be introduced to the topic and the structure of the Case Study. The whole performance of the dancers had no music as stimulus or sound. The dancers said it was challenging but right in order to investigate the topic of creativity.

6 Analysis of the Results –The Case Study and the Qualitative Interviews

6.1 Introduction of the Case Study to the Probands

The probands were given an introduction before the actual filming started where a brief overview of the topic was given which laid out the structure of the theoretical part of this thesis. Particular attention had been given to the wording of the information given in this introduction in order not to frame the output of the interview towards a specific outcome. They were informed of the introduction of the topic and the purpose of the thesis which embraced the following points:

1. Contemporary creativity has experienced a consumerist shift, which is often marked by the consumption demand for a creative product carrying certain characteristics (which will not be explored within the scope of this thesis).
2. This work concentrates on a universal human aspect in creativity, as have already been seen in the mentioned researches about alternative ways of understanding and expressing creativity in Chapter 3, “Culturally diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity”. For example, Taoism is one of such content-related practices.
3. The structure of this thesis will be constructed with both a theoretical and a practical element (in the form of case studies of the probands). Both aspects try to relate to one’s personal relationship with the medium of dance and investigate the main research question of what is creativity in performing practices, in the context of dance, and through and with dancers.

After this introduction, the actual process of the case study was implemented as described before. The order of participation was then agreed among them. The first was Einav, followed by Leila and, lastly, Albert. Before going into the practical part of the improvisation sequence, the probands raised the question about which area they should focus when they execute the performance. The analyst referred back to the topic of creativity and a helpful focus on

internal processes, but not to emphasise on external modes of affection.

6.2 Execution of the Practical Part of the Case Study: Improvisation

Diekmann's book of empirical social studies described observation as a methodological tool for data acquisition. This tool originated in the very beginning of academic-institutionalised science. It is similar to a social report²⁰ and holds a strong subjective view since the researcher provides the only data to be analysed. Yet, by being aware of the aspect of subjectiveness, observation can offer an additional perspective on the content to be evaluated, in this case the video material. In this chapter, how the study took place will be subjectively described from the perspective of the researcher. This performative part of the improvisation is also included in the description and will be later compared to the thinking-out-loud-comments of the dancers in this chapter as the following:

Firstly, the external description of the performance by the researcher following Diekmann's (2007) approach of observation to the internal process description of the dancer gathered by the technique of the video-stimulated-recall-method. Secondly, the results of the theoretical part of the work and the literature review to the drawn data from the practical application in the Case Study.

The dancers were asked to take part in the case study one after another. They agreed amongst one another in which order they wanted to participate. After the order was agreed upon: First Einav, Leila and then Albert, the two remaining dancers were asked to leave the audition room while the improvisation and the following interview part took place. As the session began, the dancer took a position at the back of the dancefloor. It was stated that by a sign of the hand, the time would be marked of the beginning and end of the three-minute slot. After Einav's first improvisation, she was asked how she felt about the time slot. She stated that she found it the exact duration she needed to explore the topic of research. This question was

20. A 'Social Report' can have any possible object of research, such as a theatre play or a social situation. It reports circumstances and reflects and reports on observed situations. The observation is qualified as a methodological tool based on its reference to the containment of the theoretical framework and the hypotheses established before it (Diekmann 2007).

raised in case the duration of the improvisation should be adjusted for a deeper outcome for data collection.

I took my place as the researcher at the front of the dancefloor and staged the smartphone which was used to record the improvisation sequence. Before giving the hand sign to signify the beginning of the sequence, it was communicated from which distance the camera should capture the dance improvisation sequence. The scope of capturing was then set at the pillars (ref video-material). After this, the sign was given to start the session. All the performances took place without musical nor sound stimulation. The focus laid on creativity and the process at an internal level. Consequently, it was helpful to reduce as many outer stimuli as possible to be able to filter the researched information.

6.3 Results of the Case Study

6.3.1 Describing Einav's Performance

Einav stands in the centre of the camera frame with around 2.5 metre distance from the camera. She faces diagonally towards the right corner of the camera angle. She starts moving to find the right standpoint, and starts to move first her hands and then her upper arms with her head reacting to it. Then, it seems she pushes something with her upper chest to the front. The movement unlocks the hips, and in a floaty movement, as if a wave streams through her body, the movements work from her hip upwards to her shoulders back into the place of beginning: the hands. Some stagnating movements are also executed. These movements are paused within them and fragmentally shifted to another pose. Now the floaty movements come back and are combined with the posing moments. From now it seems as if Einav is not consciously sending information to tell the body what it should do, but observing what her body does instead. As she moves from standing to down on the floor, different layers of space are constructed. As she continues with the fragmented and wavy movements, the movements are more enforced, growing bigger and more energetic. The extremist body parts are expressly included and creating new points of balance, focus and dynamics. Now, more space is included in the existing layers of space as she explores wider distances. She jumps

and slides to the left corner from the camera's angle. After this, it seems that the stream of movement finalises in the slide move. She gets up and starts over again by rotating the lower part of her arm and slowly letting the rest of the body to be affected by this movement. After undergoing several movements, she cuts it off and falls again where it seems the body is taking the lead to move. The difference between this sequence and the former sequence lies in this quality that the consciousness about the movement in the second sequence is more blended into the movement itself. It is more of an experience than an observation. It gains a sensual notion created by the way it allows the movement to take over. The sequence also becomes a little silly.

Einav stays on the floor and seems to rest as she moves her head up and down. She activates her breath again and initiates the movement of her chest into a movement she enhances to enter a new sequence as if it gives her the push for it. This third sequence is at first a little stagnated and consciously created. Then she falls again in a flow of wavy and fragmented movements, and adds to the movements a play with the time dimension, as if she is caused to stop and move by someone pressing the stop and play buttons in a video. From here, the leading role of movements is initiated by extremist parts of the body like the arm and the leg, which goes abruptly unexpectedly to a distanced point and the rest of the body follows almost too slow to catch up with these body parts. After this, she plays a little bit with the fluidity of human movements and generates a sequence of chopped up movements, creating the image of a machine and its robotic movements. A new moment comes up as she starts playing with the fist of her hands but it does not evolve longer as the time of the filming session is over.

6.3.2 The Video-SR: Connecting the Observed to the Content of Einav's Performance

At the beginning where Einav is almost not moving except for very soft and tiny movements of her hands, she comments with "sensation, air-feeling" and having "a feeling of joy". From here, her own set of descriptions about her movements begin to develop. "Something is growing" is said when she observes a moment of seeming hesitation to take the next step. "Movement waves" is commented when she begins to open and extends her body smoothly.

She describes her actions as “dancing to herself”, then she states “release-stops-breaks” when she begins to move suddenly. Then she says “playing with myself” while taking a very loose way towards movements by playing also with her face and hands. After this, she says that she is “back to hesitation or something I wanna say [...]” when she moves her arms down the face and pulls something out of her stomach into the empty space. From here, she has again a sudden change of movements with stagnation, which she describes again with “hold and release” and is laughing when she points towards the viewer’s direction and starts “shooting” with her hips. After this, she takes a position on the floor, which is described with the words “chill” and “breaks”. She then takes the position of crossed legs on the floor while sitting, “breathing” is what she comments when she starts to heavily lift her chest from pumping air into it, as if she is “holding something”. From here she begins again a new sequence of “shapes”. After this sequence, she falls again in a flow and becomes wide and expressive, where Einav says, “flow with the movements. See what I felt in this moment [...]”. These were all her comments on the three-minute scene she performs.

She always commented on moments, which seemed to signal a new sequence or point, which marked provocations and changes, something new and different from before, i.e., a new set of meaning in movements. The interview sequence experienced no further need of explanation. It was just asking the dancer to think out loud what she thinks when seeing the video-content, yet by focusing on inner processes. No extra questions were asked and the full video was replayed to the proband. Einav felt comfortable, yet since English is not her mother tongue, the language barrier seemed to limit her a little bit in the exact expressions she used to comment on the video content. In many sequences, there were long moments of silence where Einav had to first watch the video, process a little and then comment on it. The comments were very descriptive of the internal processes of the different sequences of the three-minute performance. They almost provided headlines for it.

6.3.3 Describing Leila’s Performance

Leila stands in a similar point as Einav: diagonally facing towards the right-hand side. She is grasping into the air in front of her as if she takes a probe of it. She starts moving her head in a floating and mechanic manner at the same time, by hesitating to move smoothly to the next

pose. Her legs open as she slides backwards on the floor while she is also spreading her arms out, which adds a dimension of space into her movement. Continuing to open and spread her arms into contrasting directions, she lowers her pelvis and moves towards the floor. Then, this exploration of space dimensions ends and a new sequence begins. It starts with her hand as the focus of the movement as she brings her shoulder to swing with it. As she plays with her hand, her body follows to react to it. It is the main element which pulls her body into subsidiary movements. Leila seems to observe it as if it is not part of her – her hand is now like a bird that flies away on its own. After the interacting sequence with the hand, a new sequence begins, with the running energy in her hand, which seems to be placed outside of her body, entering into her body now. She initiates wavy movements into her throat and which go down into her chest. From there, the energy travels outside again, in a way which ties her hands together so that it is unable for her to move obviously. The tied hands lead her to move for a while until her hands touch the floor. It seems that she has picked something up from this flow. She keeps the flow there for a move on the back, and afterwards puts the flow onto her legs through drawing big circles with her open arms. She touches her face and starts to have a playful interaction with her feet, which are giving impulses into her whole body, taking her upward and making her move in a narrowed way. From now, the movements are happening with energetic forces. Leila and her pulling movements are exploring their environment together. She ends the sequence on the floor, as if she is holding something in her arm that brings her to rotate around her body on the floor. The energetic flow then spreads to her legs and she jumps up. From here, her body seems unlocked. The movement comes from a place of knowledge that is very fluent and self-confident. She plays with her hips, and starts to shift from one expressive pose with the help of arms and legs into the other. The existing flow of energy seems to be extended into a bigger while lighter one, which influences Leila in terms of weights and degrees of heaviness and lightness in her movements, as well as her connections with the floor. After this, she falls into a very playful sequence of using her foot as an activation of movement by punching it, almost (more consciously though) introducing a narrative. She falls onto the floor and shakes off her body parts. From here, she starts jumping and shaking into a standing pose in which she continues with that. The movement becomes more peaceful and smooth, almost swiny. One can see that the shaking movement does something to her mood. She smiles now while moving. Leila moves down

in an open sitting pose exploring the connection and space between her pelvis and her feet. Now a deep connection to the floor is established and she moves her body with the help of it. The movements seem very sensual, slow and also more exhausting at the same time as if the air becomes thicker to move through – yet not burdening. Then, something inside her moves her suddenly, a new movement sequence starts to kick off, yet the filming time is over and she comes to an end in a sitting position.

6.3.4 The video-SR: Connecting the observed to the Content of Leila's Performance

In the beginning, where Leila moves in a similar way to Einav - almost touching the air, Leila also comments with similar words of “waiting” and “sensing”. “The back-space. Space on the back”, she moves her shoulder backwards and starts moving her arms “and then the opposition front-back”. “Sensing this twisting and pulling [...]” when she rotates her wrists and her arms around her body and opens them in opposite directions “from both sides of the space [...]”. “And then I noticed my hand, my arm” the movements developed. “My hands taking the lead”. She looks at her hands which are held right in front of her face and says, “my hands are entering my whole arm [...]”. Although nothing is said in the sequence, the movements are subjectively very interesting for her eyes. Similar to Einav's style of commenting, Leila first has to observe the recorded movements, since it seems she does not know anymore what she did there on the conscious level. “Hands, fingers sensing”, is what she comments as she holds something invisible between her hands. As she stretches her arms to find the floor, she feels the “floor-temperature”. She is sliding with her whole body on the floor, but when she mentions “floor”, she is saying it in a lovingly laughing manner. She touches her chest and says “yeah, skin, sensing”, and she starts to giggle and says, “more skin, inner thighs, skin, skin, ‘wuah’, something more sensual, sexual and then ‘oh’, rhythmic hands again, finger-leading”, she says it when she sits on the floor bringing her hands together while they touch the floor. She also uses “waiting” similarly like how Einav uses “chill”. She starts lifting her body from the floor on her back which is “giving into the floor and then suddenly rhythm is there [...]”. She then moves bigger and very lightly, which is moving “more outside”. She has a very fluent sequence which is softly guided

by her arms caressing around her, accompanied with the relaxing sound of “mhm”. Her movements then become clearer again. “playing, balancing, noticing outside and the sky and the huge distance – this hugeness of whoa – distance sky”. She starts the sequence touching her feet and says, “and then something else again – sound”. She sings this word “sound” as she falls on the floor and uses her body to produce sound, “sounds, play, noise, more noise, bones, playing the sound, something more giddy, the pelvis inside, more rhythms [...]”. The sequence stops and she lowers her hips in a broad lowered standing position, her voice also sinks in tone when she says “sinking, sinking, bathing, self-conscious, waiting, not-knowing and then floor again, sensation with the floor [...]”. As she is working very smoothly with the floor, she comments how her whole body is “arriving, giving in, melting. Something more gooey and thick air. Tension, resistance and sound. Noticing again the sound. Playful, playing again with the sound. Rhythm, texture – enjoying again the sound [...]”. As she is giving these comments, Leila again does small movements accompanying the previous movements seen on the screen. She is very closely describing where her attention was in the moment of performance. Again, the movements made with more consciousness are the ones which can be described at length. The transitory and smooth sequences done without a lot of consciousness are usually described with single words. These comments are also made usually after some processing of the recorded moment but not simultaneously as the moment is replayed.

6.3.5 Describing Albert’s Performance

Albert is the last of the participating performers. He stands in the centre of the dancefloor but with the same distance from the camera of an estimated 2.5 metres. He enters very directly into the session by creating robotic movements with his arm from left to right, the body follows with continuous stagnation in between. For Albert, it seems the message or image he wants to transport is demonstrated clearly. The sets of movements created seem already very clear and explored. He shifts to the left-hand side of the dancefloor into evolving poses. Albert arrives with his wrist on the floor. He then sends an impulse to let his arm fall and follow. Albert takes a visual fix-point somewhere at the ceiling and lets the body move underneath. He keeps the gaze that holds him and keeps him in a specific possibility of

freedom in movement, yet his body collapses underneath that and falls onto the ground. From here the body is repressed into uncomfortable poses of holding the head and moving the hips in the opposite direction. It seems that the awareness of space enters the performance. His pelvis then straightens and pulls the body up into a standing position at the same time he explores the floor with his feet. Meanwhile, his hand is magnetically drawn onto the floor. The body follows by strongly withholding the left arm to take part in this body movement. Focusing on the space in between the floor and his fingertips, Albert explores the space with linear movement and rubbing his fingers upwards in the air to figure out the texture of it. Albert then extends this space by lifting his upper body up. From here it seems that out of the texture of space a wide movement in the form of a swing of the leg is built. His upper body is still locked in a wrenched pose, but his legs smoothly direct to the ground. His shoulders are drawn to his head and unable to move freely on the floor yet he straightens up back to a standing pose. Afterwards, he develops singular poses using mirroring-techniques. He uses his fingers and feet to build symbolic and detailed forms, which seem to become key points of focus, and locking and unlocking movements of the body. Like a conductor, the thumb and pointing finger meet and direct the body into movement. During this whole time, the movements seem very head-directed and consciously created. After this sequence, his shoulders unlock, as his body takes over to open the locked shoulders. From here, the movements start to come more from the inside out, and allow themselves to partner with the dancer's breath. Immediately again, a conscious movement from the open shoulders shifts to lock the foot section and hinders the dancer to go down by making him move forth and back between almost sitting and almost standing positions. While holding his feet in position, the dancer's body strives to gain freedom through vast movements of leaning back as far as possible. For one moment, his arm takes the lead. Then, the conductor posture appears again. He touches his forehead, the place where the major energy of the movements comes from. The body seems to ease here from that touch. Albert then focuses on his joints and jowls the body. He explores the body as well as the function of his limbs by throwing his arms and legs like a pendulum moving away from his body. Afterwards, he moves through an invisible parkour by stopping movements from being finished.

Unlike the others who explored the space and their own bodies first, Albert creates movement right from the beginning. The focus on body parts is made not so much by creating a flow

of connection but by exploring non-obvious parts of the body like the joints. Guided by and orientated towards his joints, the dancer takes twisted poses while his lower body is moving seemingly smoothly in a different way. Albert is always close to the floor, his arms are pushing and pulling with the force of gravity. His legs are moving in a floaty manner away from the floor with no limitation of weight. He gets up and cuts the air with his straight stretched arm. As he makes move after move, it seems that his body parts are isolated; the head moves, then the arms, followed by the legs. The movements of each body part happen separately. One move closes as another opens. He looks like he keeps track of the time and seems to check how much time is left by looking towards my direction. Carefully he gets up and softly moves his feet towards his hands which are still touching the floor. From here, he gets up looking again to check maybe the time. He takes a gaze onto his hands. He holds them as if he puts something aside and then back into an imaginary pocket of his pants and leaves the frame of the video due as the filming time ends.

6.3.6 The Video-SR: Connecting the Observed to the Content of Albert's Performance

In a similar way to the first two dancers, Einav and Leila, Albert begins his sequence with his hands moving softly in the air. He says, "I feel like I am trying to do a bit of floating into space, it does not have too much weight [...]", as he sees himself move in dynamic big movements. He also comments on the locking of certain parts of his body, "like my upper body is more like disjointed by my legs, which are like pushing the ground [...]". As he begins to move his fingers like a conductor in the video, he comments, "it is a bit of a struggle with shoulders and trying to move from there [...]". When he sees his body open again, he comments, "I feel like a sense of repetition [...]". As he observes how grand gestures of arm posture and opening take place, he says "I am trying to push away [...]". As Albert sees himself continue to move around his ground-tied feet, he says he is "trying to stay soft, even though there is a struggle [...]". When he touches his forehead and the dance becomes more comfortable for the body in the video, he says, "and here I feel as if I am a bit shy [...]", as big movements including slides, open arms and pirouettes are taken over. He ends the sequence on the floor lying, closing with a pose of putting something in his pocket. He comments this pose with "remembering".

Albert comments very sparsely on his dance performance. Before the dance session begins, he was the one asking the most questions about what I expect from them. Looking into the length of text it took to describe his performance section, and comparing it to the actual said and commented by Albert, it shows that Albert had difficulties to express linguistically on what he has executed physically.

6.4 Analysis of Data drawn from the Video-SR: 'Thinking Aloud'

Having the performers comment on the videos using the video-stimulated-recall method was helpful to compare and connect the outer views and assumptions of the observer to the actual internal processes and goals of each performer. Yet, it seemed to be difficult to express linguistically the physical processes. Also, all of the performers needed to first observe what they did in the video to understand and describe it. They were not able, from the first moment, to communicate the inner processes which took place when watching it. It is only later when they reflected on the performative sequence in the interviews that they could describe it in more detail, especially Leila, who commented on her performance section with linear correspondence with the video to express her thoughts. It seemed that what she said was similar to how she produced her performance, i.e., without a conscious reflection of it. She was very much able in this state to comment throughout every moment of watching her performance and link her movements to linguistic terms. She had many moments in which she just described her performance with a sound such as "mhm", or exclaimed about its nature such as stressing "the hugeness of the sky" with a "whoa". This is a similar phenomena described by Kuo (1996) and Csíkszentmihályi (2004), which people experience during a state of daydreaming or a *inbetween* state of (conscious) unconsciousness. As described in Chapter 3 "Cultural diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity" Kuo (1996) describes the moment of Kekulé's discovery of atoms in a state between awakesness and dreaming. Here it seems, that the access to the produced creativity and the moment of execution is best given when letting go of conscious restriction. As mentioned before, this can be connected to the technique of Indian painters, who try to release the ego in order to be filled by creativity or the

to-be-created object. Also, it is to be witnessed that Leila and also Einav let go of linguistic restriction of order and grammatically rightness to be able to describe their experience in the moment of dance creativity. Albert later told me that for him it was always difficult to express himself within language, which led to one reason for choosing the profession of dance. In the moment of video-SR, he had huge difficulties to reflect on the produced movements and put them into words. It shows here in the context of dance again, that creativity takes place in a level which lies deeper than social and cultural *conscious* agreements.

The data generated from the video-SR method will be discussed in the following section. They show connections way more with than just on the cognitive level, in which mode it is also possible to access the experience of creativity. This says more about creativity itself than the reflection through the words of the dancers. It enables one to locate the *place of creativity* in a certain way, since the rational and conscious processes of the mind may hinder one to re-enter the experience of creativity and especially the moments of *flow experience*. It showed in all three cases that the probands stopped commenting at some moments, when the movements seemed very easy, light and floaty. They were moments in which Leila commented with “whoa” or Einav with “flow with the movements. See what I felt in the moment [...]”. The keyword here of *feelings* relates strongly to H'Doubler (1957) statements of feelings which are the fuel for creativity or, how she terms it, 'life force'. Following her idea of how a dancer establishes in the moment of creation a bridge from his or her internal to the external world, it is what is called in the domain of the arts *transcendence*²¹, “[b]ack to hesitation or what I want to say” (Einav) – translating from inside out. To repeat Deleuze's quote again: “It's not beginnings and endings that count, but middles. Things and thoughts advance or grow out from the middle, and that's where you have to get to work, that's where everything unfolds [...]” (Pope 2005). This place seems to be from where the mystical *it* or *something* can be accessed, explored and expressed. Also here in Einav's statement “Back to hesitation or what I am trying to say [...]”, it can be said that after a sequence of flowing movement, a conscious moment of arranging the experience follows into the structure of thoughts. As an

21. 'Transcendence' goes beyond ordinary perception, and dance may offer this highly spiritual experience. In diverse cultures, dance is used to lead one into states of trance. It is a special version of an introvert state. In the context of dance, transcendence can be understood as an “altered state of consciousness” and it often means a transformation of perception, knowledge and point of view (Go 2011, 63). From a classic perspective, it means to have an experience beyond what senses usually are able to grasp and form from it (Go 2011).

example, when Leila comments on her performance after having a very fluent section, she says, “sinking, sinking, bathing, self-conscious, waiting, not-knowing and then floor again, sensation with the floor [...]”. Morris (2005) refers to this process by emphasising that the dancer, similar to Rogers’ (1954) call for dropping the place of hindering from the psyche of psychological wealth, has to “attempt to respond in movement without blocking or inhibiting their truest impulses, and to get beyond habitual movement unless deciding consciously to explore it [...]” (Morris 2005, 93). There is a difference between the ways Einav and Leila responded to the video-content in the video-SR from that of Albert. His comments were purely technical and concentrated very much on the processes the body undertook rather than reflecting on what the *outer* provoked inside of the dancer. The outside and inside here refers to the established bridge, which H’Doubler (1957) describes. Albert, for example, described a feeling only one time, when he touched his forehead, which appeared in a very intimate, soft and organic way. With this movement, he said “and here I feel as if I am a bit shy [...]”. It shows that he seemed to be interested by watching what he did, and in moments which did not feel familiar to him, he was not able to comment on his movements like Leila or Einav did, who chose to describe internal processes of feeling using terms such as ‘joy’ or ‘sexual’. Despite this very different way of responding to the video-SR, two other points stood out. One is how some terms were mentioned by all of the probands, and the other is how their sessions all took place from a similar point of beginning. All of them described the first 30 second of their performance with the word *sensing*. At the beginning of the performance, all of the probands executed soft and light movements first with their hands and later with the arms, and described these movement and this state with *sensing*: “waiting, sensing”, “sensation, air-feeling”, after which everyone widened the dimension into the space. Another point which is referred to commonly is “playing”. It seems that at moments, where the dancers took some time to process the very fluent and energetic movements, they went to a state of familiarising with it and started to include them on a conscious level similar to Morris’ (2005) statement above. After Leila had a smooth sequence, she fell into a state she commented with “playing”, as well as Einav, who described her one dance-sequence with “playing with myself”. The movements were very free, not orientated towards aesthetics, but using the space freely. Maslow (1968) refers in the context of SA-creativity to the kind of creativity which children carry out when playing. It is a playful knowledge about what is

being done, yet not consciously reflected on, and by this, located and judged.

These two aspects, which mark very significantly the beginning of the session and also a certain *technique* of approaching the task of improvisation, are taken to structure the analysis of the overall data. The content of the interview is filtered and structured by terms which are highly frequented, reflecting the content of the theoretical part of this work or are mentioned by all three dancers. Amongst it will be: *play* or *playfulness* and *sense* or *sensing*, generated here from the short analysis of the isolated video-SR part. Also, the main structure is given by the raised questions of the Semi-Structured Interview.

6.5 Analysis of the Implemented Semi-Structured Interview

The interviews took place right after the experimental session of the performance and the individual video-SR sessions. Since the design of the interviews was semi-structured, the questions differed or were adjusted based on the comments from the video-SR. In the following, the results are structured according to certain topics which have also been discussed in the theoretical part of this work: Chapter 1-4. The content of the replies are observed to have met the central arguments and results from the theoretical research.

The content relevant to the following interview questions will be presented in this section, while responses to the questions out of the topic of creativity or the set of structured interview questions will be excluded.

1. Where does the energy for creativity come from?
2. Where is the energy from creativity located (in the body)?
3. How can one reach creativity?
4. How does creativity feel?

The four questions were not always asked in the same order.

6.5.1 Where does the Energy for Creativity Come From?

This question was very much the result of insights gleaned from Chapter 4, “From Theory to Practice, Self-Actualisation and the Phenomenon of Creativity in the context of the Medium of Dance”. It was the opening question and was asked in the way it was written. Partially, it had been replied to as ‘What is creativity’, what seemed needed to be replied first before one went deeper to answer the question of where it comes from.

Einav referred to ‘images’ and ‘equality’ as being what both enabled and provoked creativity. Albert later said, “[creativity comes from] my eyes. It’s from where I observe the outside. Maybe I try to mirror what I see. That is where I get the information from [...]”. Leila’s first sentence in replying to the question was “Sensing, actually. I think we are going out. Then the focus is more outside. With the eyes but also the inner focus of coming back to myself, to my own body. The safe place is always the floor [...]”.

All of them spoke here, from out- and inside. These places seemed to be differentiated through the tool of observation, the body part of the eyes or the physical act of seeing and perceiving the *outside* built the connection between the outside and the inside. Leila also spoke about focus. I asked her at the beginning of the interview about a certain moment when I perceived that she had a very floaty session of movements which she also later commented on it in the video-SR. She replied that her focus concentrated very much on the inside but then she *saw* me and she got aware again of not being “just with myself”. Here I want to quote Albert, who said also that his focus was a place from where he drew creativity. “Focus creates an intention. Somebody can [stand] still but, depending on the focus that they have, it makes [a] difference to the other. Like you can move but if you move without a focus behind it or an idea, it is just a mobile thing. That makes it other than ‘look at that beautiful body’ [...]”. This point he made is very interesting; it almost gives a deeply philosophical notion to it. Creativity can just be labelled as such when an intention (focus) is created behind it. Going back to the story of Genesis, where becoming aware of oneself or, here, the creative force, is the only way of reaching “real” creativity (Chapter 1). Applying Maslow’s statement that real creativity resembles children in playing in this case, it seems to contradict with Albert’s understanding. Albert said that his focus created intention. With a focus, one could get to

the point of actual creation; otherwise, it would have been merely beautiful. Leila went a bit into the opposite direction following Maslow's (1968) approach. She said, "[creativity comes] from a sense of play actually and wanting to express. It's a very human thing of wanting to create, wanting to make or wanting to express yourself. I think it has a lot to do with expression [...]". Both Leila and Albert agreed with this desire to create. Albert said, "[w]e are all in the need of creating something. If not it would be boring and I will get very depressed [...]" Yet, Leila stated that even in the moments of pressure to produce something, it should still be easy and playful. She said,

Initially, there shouldn't be the pressure to create something. Like I said, there should be this playfulness and openness. To really be in the moment. A lot of focus. Of course, you can also be really creative or have these creative moments in every busy place[s], where you can be super distracted, but still, I think there is a sort of internal focus or [where you'll] be really perceptive towards, and in this moment[...]

For Albert, creativity almost seemed to originate from the drive of accomplishment, he said,

[i]t gives me an adrenaline rush. This is addictive and it is also that sense of accomplishment that you can have an idea and that can be amazing but to accomplish the idea that you have in your mind [...] When you get through these moments of unclarity and difficulty and you are going to be able to create and reach something, in the end, [it] gives you that sense of accomplishment [...]

Drawing from the above, it is observed that some conscious moments are needed to translate the internal feelings to the external movements as mentioned before in H'Doubler's (1957, 252) idea of establishing a bridge, so that what can be accomplished by an intentional focus can be bridged, in the context of dance, with the tool of the eyes. Also, Rogers refers to this connection as the tendency "which is the primary motivation for creativity as the organism forms new relationships to the environment in its endeavour most fully to be itself [...]" (Rogers 1954, 254).

Einav took a different approach to the question 'Where does creativity come from?' by trying to investigate *how* to reach the state of creativity, "it's about honesty when you are honest with yourself, then you can get to the thing you wanna say or to have that kind of idea you want to explore [...]". This point is very important considering Rogers' attempt towards creativity in which awareness is considered to be the key to access creativity. Awareness means,

as discussed in Chapter 2 “Culturally Diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity”, to acknowledge circumstances as they are and deal with them based on *reality* without eliminating what does not feed the ego or one’s current idea or perception “because there is the openness to one phase of experience, creativity is possible [...]” (254).

This is the very essence of growth: that in the moment of friction to not close off from situations but be open for them. Here, Einav said that being honest with oneself brought one into the state where creativity would become available and be enacted. So, contrary to Albert, the focus from Einav’s perspective is a form derived from being honest to oneself, since “you can get to the thing you wanna say or to have that kind of idea you want to explore [...]”,

[to be] open and have this ability to release and open with other people and to not judge yourself. To expose yourself [to] what you really feel, what you really want to say. But really go inside, deeply without any masks. If you are really honest with it, it can give really good creativity[...]

At this point, it is also observed that both Albert and Leila revealed the internal process as a result of an inner exploration, they said, Albert: “[It is] a sense of inner research or exploration [...]”, Leila: “It comes from a place of wanting to express [...] In order to feel that you exist or you are alive, you need some sort of interaction with other people. It is about sharing, it is also a language. It is properly the most personal one [...]”

Similarly, H’Doubler mentions this inner ‘life force’ which drives one to express and communicate. Rogers (1954) assumes that the need to express oneself draws from one’s anxiety of separateness and its attempt to resolve it. He also explains it as a desire to communicate, where one may further explore her or his desire to communicate with oneself. Further, the locus of communication is always internal and an I-perspective is always embedded in it since the basis of evaluation always lies within the creative person him- or herself (Rogers 1954).

6.5.2 Where is the Energy of Creativity located (in the Body)?

As mentioned earlier, Albert located the place of creativity in his eyes. Leila and Einav both chose the same place of location: the pelvic area. Leila very surely touched her lower belly

at that moment of response. Einav took a longer search for the reply. After the question had been raised, Einav said: “It, a lot, connects to feelings, it is very challenging to say where feelings come from in the body [...] For me it’s somewhere here in this area: the chest, the throat but also like the head when we think and feel. I also feel it in the stomach in my chest – everything here in this area [...]”, she pointed to her stomach. A follow-up question is raised ‘Do the different locations of the body carry different notions or kinds of creativity?’ She replied,

In my unconscious mind, it's giving me other inputs but they all have a connected energy between themselves. I feel it's calm inside and then it goes outside like a breath or something that connects. I can feel it in my stomach and then somehow it connects but I know it is different parts which bring me this[...]

She touched her stomach and then took her hand to move it upwards to her chest then she did a move with her hand as if something came out of her mouth. Then, I asked, ‘Why did you use this gesture to describe it?’

She answered, “[m]aybe I feel that something burns or, something inside you wants to say or to feel and to give it outside, to give it an expression, to let it out. I think it’s something in the energy of the body that gives it an expression out. It feels something circular [...]”.

I went further and asked, ‘When you let it out, what happens?’. She replied, “It makes me relax, satisfied, and positive. I feel it also influences my surroundings, the space, the people, the world [...]”

On the other hand, Leila related the location of the energy from creativity with the need to be seen and feeling alive and creative. She said,

So, I think it's very -- even if you go more initially, more abstract -- the energy of creativity is the same kind of energy that we all share but how this creativity is put into actual movement, this is super personal. Because I have my body, which is different from someone else's body. My way of manifesting this super abstract energy is really personal. So, we can therefore interact and share with other people and share ourselves with other people [...]

Leila’s response resonates well to Einav’s comment on creativity being something circular. In Chapter 3 “Culturally diverse Understanding and Practice of Creativity”, one of the understanding and practices of *Eastern* creativity is described, contrary to the idea of *ex*

nihilo, instead of creating from *nothingness*, one transforms what is energetically already present, which will realise itself through the (individual) hands of the creative person. In this context, Leila offered a very interesting definition of creativity and its nature: Creativity as the individual act of manifesting universal energy.

Similar to H'Doubler's (1957) comment that emotions not expressed will break free and realise themselves in dance and its movements, Einav thought that "something inside you want to say or to feel and to give it outside, to give it an expression, to let it out [...]". This energy is what H'Doubler (1957, 161) calls as one of the driving forces to creativity, "[l]ife, in all its forms, is a manifestation of quickening force sensed as energy. Coexistence with this force, and regulating its flow, is the phenomenon of rhythm... Its presence is revealed in the life patterns and forms of all organic processes [...]".

6.5.3 How does Creativity Feel?

After these two challenging but also orientative questions, another question was raised, 'How does creativity feel?'. Albert raised an interesting point. He emphasised that in his profession as a dancer, he is always surrounded by creativity and creative minds as well as in his doing.

As humans and we as dancers, we are inside this creative environment [...] So, I don't know how to live without it, what is it, or how to describe it. As long as I have the will and the passion to continue dancing and to be creative and to continue doing processes, we as a collective and individual are working to transform ideas and physical shapes. The day that I am not into that any more, that the day when I will feel 'that is creativity' [...]

Albert also takes an interesting approach towards replying to all the questions being raised. Generally, he referred to creativity as merely being a drive of his life, as somehow also a lifestyle: a way to live according to one's choices.

"I tried to make a list of little tiny goals. Like [making] little changes to like 'I never took a cold shower' [...] then when you think about it, [you ask yourself] 'why are you putting up that goal [of taking a cold shower]?'". You just want to either grow or challenge yourself. I also see this as a creative place too. It does not always need to be, 'oh, I am making art' [...]"

Albert described in great detail at the beginning that he would make use of difficulties to

create something new. He had locked a certain part of his body on purpose to see how his body would find a way out and a *new* alternative way of movement.

This is an equal interaction between the body and the person as two separate entities. It seems that Albert had given his body a challenge to see how it would deal with it, without carrying yet the knowledge that “[d]ance has a million possibilities”. He also said, “creativity is extensional”, similar to how Rogers (1954) speaks of *extensionalities* in the moment of openness towards an object which is not known. Thus, Albert located creativity very much in his mind and consciousness, which could be observed in his very directed manipulations of his body. This also showed, at the same time, that the body is an institution apart from him in his consciousness, which carries the potential of producing something new, that he did not know yet.

As he explained in his description of creativity, it was also closely connected with the feeling of accomplishment. He would apply this approach of reaching creativity through overcoming challenges in his movements to his daily life too, since creativity to him lies within the will to grow, even in daily circumstances, as in the example of the cold shower, he would provoke the challenge consciously to make himself grow in his own way.

This shows his tendency of always trying to meet the new or the unknown to stimulate growth and avoid stagnation, which he also mentioned later when replying to the question ‘How can one reach creativity?’.

Einav described something in the context of this question what Sternberg (1999) also describes. He refers to a study that when people are close to solving a problem, they describe a feeling of warmth. Einav referred to a feeling that “burns” and “[i]t makes me relax, satisfied, positive. I feel it also influences my surroundings, the space, the people, the world [...]”.

This feeling of warmth can be referred very much back to Leila’s statement of universal energy and how everyone could have access to it, and how the individuality and its manifestation could be established as a connected communication which resonated with the environment and its people. In addition, Leila said that for her this connection felt effortless, “[t]he actual creativity is effortless. Even if in movement it will translate into effort, still the creativity itself is effortless [...]”. This last statement translates very much to the next

question of the interviews: ‘How can one reach creativity?’.

6.5.4 How can one Reach Creativity?

Interestingly, Albert replied to the question by saying how an egoless state can be most receptive to creativity,

“By being open, being open to new ideas, you can not live from the ego of yesterday. You need to stay humble and curious [...] Acceptance, to stay humble to keep your mind open to new possibilities and new ways of seeing things. If you keep yourself interested, you’ll be able to transform yourself [...]”.

Here, it shows very much the spirit of the belief of Taoism that by losing one’s egocentric filters, one can stay open and be receptive to the object in its essence, and be curious instead of relying on former experiences. Through Albert’s tendency to relate creativity with one’s style of living, this also suggested how this egoless state could be understood as essential to reach creativity in an all-round manner, a state which could also be embedded into one’s decisions in personal values and whole ways of (daily) life.

Leila referred to her way of reaching creativity as one’s relation with oneself, which resonates very much to Maslow’s (1968) and Rogers’ (1954) ideas of self-actualising creativity, she said, “[e]specially in dancing, it is about being super in tune with yourself and therefore a lot of listening to what is there already [...] Going back to yourself [...]”, I can reach it when I am in tune with myself [...]

Here, “listening” can be related to the word “sensing”, a term which the dancers mentioned when commenting in the video-SR sessions on their very soft beginning approaches towards their movements, their bodies and environment. Einav summarised her thoughts about how this idea can lead to creativity by replying to the question in the following way, in which one may see how listening or sensing can be a way to reach honesty with oneself. She said,

[t]o be really honest with yourself. I don’t think it’s a talent to be creative. I just think there are just some people, who are more open and have this ability to release and open with other people and to not judge yourself, to expose yourself to what you really feel, what you really want to say; but really go inside deeply without any masks. If you are really honest with it, I can give

really good creativity. I think everyone is really different from each other. If we will be true to ourselves, like [being] honest to ourselves, we can bring something different, something creative, something interesting to see in yourself and other people [...]

On the other hand, Leila remarked the point of the universal access of creativity in her answer, an idea which is similar to what is mentioned in the theoretical part of this work, i.e., going into action to translate ideas into reality is one of the most significant moments of experiencing creativity in its whole. She said,

[j]ust by starting to do something. It's the same like now: for sure the first few movements were not there. Not the whole thing was 'there'. It is good to start something, and I do think it changes, or allows things to change. If you have too heavy a focus, there is a certain stuckness. For some people, it just means jogging, for me, it's just dancing around, to be silly and playful [...]

Here, contrary to Albert, Leila emphasises that a focus which was put beforehand on top of the created, or in this context, executed or *done*, could withhold one from getting into a creative state. Yet, at one point, all of them agreed on a significant element to creativity, i.e., openness. It is necessary for one to be open about one's experiences in one's environment, energy and ideas in order to create. Also, in *Eastern* teaching, openness is one of the simplest but most important decisions to make in order to transit between states, as demonstrated in a pre-practise scenario with meditation practitioner and teacher in Lisboa, Juan Yusta. Yusta always asks his students whether they want to feel open or closed before their meditation practise, through which he reminds them of the importance of openness by showing them the contrasting reaches of the embodying gestures of an open palm and a closed fist. How this decision is important in generating creativity can be seen in Albert's comment on himself. After the interview, Albert said that he found himself very judgemental towards many situations and objects before, and that pulled him away from getting to know things deeply and lose the possibility to learn more. I replied that what he said was true, yet in my personal experience, this was also very strongly related to one's relation with oneself. Referring back to the theoretical findings in this dissertation, I argue that if one is at peace with oneself, it is easier for one to be open towards new things coming to her or him, since one can also know where one is standing and how one is standing in front of it. However, if one is not in a balanced and open state, one may experience difficulties to allow unfamiliar things to enter into one's environment. This may come back to Leila's comment on how one needed to be

in tune with oneself in order to create, or what Einav meant when she was speaking about being honest with oneself. Following Leila's statement of creativity being the manifestation of an universal energy, I suggest that organisms may only *get hold* of this energy if they have space for something new internally.

7 Conclusion

The question of ‘how to reach creativity?’ also tells a lot about creativity’s nature. This work outlined different approaches, from *Western* psychology to *Eastern* attempts which connect to Taoism and the way it provides access to the state of creativity. These sophisticated theoretical ideas show significantly similar aspects to the results of the implemented Case Study. In many ways, the conclusions drawn from the body of research from different perspectives in literature and the dance practices in the case study outlined here refer to creativity (also) as working with(in) one’s (inner)-self.

To experience creativity means to always experience change and transformation in an individual or in a group and a society. Creativity is dynamic and it follows the hints of given statements to unfold, based on the conditions of being open and honest to oneself. This can be created by an inner state of balance, which asks for the dealing and interplay of opposites and bringing them into a place of creation, which can be achieved by having a (conscious) focus aiming for that balance. These ideas of focus, balance, honesty/openness and the self have been explored as the key concepts supporting this research.

7.1 Focus

Focus can take place through, for example, a conscious challenge to oneself. Here, in the case of Albert’s ‘cold showers’, a ritualised attempt to confront oneself with an unknown situation, to force oneself to react openly to it, is made with intention. Focus is a component which can be located in the side of conscious aspects leading towards creativity. All the presented attempts ask for a focused or conscious attitude towards the topic of creativity, so that, in consequence, one can be capable of understanding it. Furthermore, focus also asks for knowing or having the tools on how to deal with creativity. Focus is especially highlighted in Albert’s statements to ‘manipulate’ and form the force of creativity as the individual likes to. One can say that this is an advanced step to experiencing creativity. In a similar way, Tao advocates to contain a certain focus in oneself by training oneself to lift one’s perspectives onto a conscious level and intentionally step back from objects to take a

non-filtered perspective. Similar to Rogers' (1954) view of awareness as the key to creativity, this self-challenging approach enables one to perceive objects and its environment outside of given categories, it is carried out based on a "lack of rigidity and permeability of boundaries in concept, beliefs, perceptions and hypothesis [...]" (Rogers 1954, 254).

In doing so, the focus stays away from one's ego. This was reflected in what Albert said that the success from yesterday, and the push it gave one's ego, will not be sustainable and last. One needs to create an attitude which always allows spaces for creativity other than the self. Tao and *Eastern* attempts resonate with this. By carrying an ego-less perception of creativity also on a social level, Tao treats creativity as an universal resource which could be accepted by oneself and shared with others without any boundaries,

Rogers (1954, 254) says that its needs "[a] tolerance of ambiguity where ambiguity exists [...] Ability to receive much conflicting information without forcing closure upon the situation [...]"

Focus does not mean only as a conscious perception, it is sustained also through a balance or interplay of various conscious perceptions, as in Leila's comment that a focus which is too strong can create rigidity since nothing new can stream in.

Thus, focus in this research is defined as having one's consciousness concentrated and condensed into a certain part of the body, of the space around, on a feeling or anything else, yet in parallel it asks for awareness of all other possibilities around. The conscious can then be understood in this context as a spotlight, which lights a specific sharp spot in a dark room, the subconscious, on the other hand, knows about everything else which remains in the dark. Here, a fluidity between the two is what a balance between focus and openness will achieve.

7.2 Balance

Following on from the above, the concept of balance with respect to creativity in this research can be referred to as a peaceful position maintained towards the contradiction between the complexity or the richness of reality in and outside of oneself. As has already been described, this is the way 'Yin and Yang' coexists with one another. As portrayed in its symbol, at any

point in relation (more yin or more yang), one is present in the other and its whole is always balanced.

Similarly, this balance in reaching creativity is not needed only in one's perspective and understanding of oneself and the environment, it is needed also in the interplay of one's conscious and the subconscious in one's inner creative journey.

When Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi (2014) talk about the balance of challenge and skill or Kuo (1996) of the moment of daydreaming or being in a tired mode, there is always a perfect interplay of the conscious and subconscious when all channels are open for creativity.

Following the theoretical part of this dissertation as well as the statements of the probands, as dancers, this balance can be achieved through openness, which is mentioned over and over again by Rogers (1954) and Maslow (1968) and the dancers. Einav treated the phenomenon as a state of openness and honesty, what can be seen in this context as very close or almost being the same. At this point, it is possible to mention that the state of balance is relevant also to the act of openness or honesty.

7.3 Honesty/Openness

In the interviews, especially in that of Einav, it was stressed that the tool or attitude of honesty towards oneself is an important aspect in reaching and experiencing creativity. This is so called the *focus* she took. She said that to reach creativity, one first needs to reach a point of not carrying any 'masks' towards oneself and grasp "what one wants to say" – the communicating message, and translate it to the outside. This state is not easy since it puts one out of control and in a vulnerable position as discussed before. Openness and honesty also correspond here to bell hook's attempts towards love. In the act of love lies acceptance, and by this openness and this ability towards oneself, to others and one's environment. To achieve this effortless state of creation, and interaction between one's focus and the subconscious of the energetic force, one needs to take an honest look at oneself without withholding any information, and by the act of love, not labelling processes (Rogers 1954), (Kuo 1996), (hooks 2001), to again "reveal the simple (uncarved) self", one's "original nature" (Kuo 1996, 201).

As creativity resonates not just within the mind-body and soul, but also in the environment and people or objects around us, this ability is of utmost necessity in experiencing the moment described by Csíkszentmihályi as the *flow*, or what Leila speaks of as an effortless creational moment. It seems that creativity arises in unifying and balancing oneself with the environment. Within this action lies a creative force which arises from the interplay of ‘Yin and Yang’. Here, the concept of ‘Yin and Yang’ is understood again as fluidly transiting between contradictions or binaries, so as to embrace all the states which are lying in between the conscious and the subconscious as mentioned above. As seen from the above, focus, balance, honesty/openness are intertwined forces engaged in the process of reaching creativity. Within this state and process, which is a dynamic, never-ending and universal one, as Florida (2012) puts it as an endless recourse, creativity gains an extra quality. It is a ‘life force’ working within us. In moments of focus while being flexible and open, one’s active energy becomes the drive of creativity, as Leila described it. Coming from all these attempts and perspectives, and looking back onto the given definitions of spirituality as “a vital force within living beings [...]” and a place of stepping into the connection with oneself and with others and the natural world, this study considers the act or the way to reaching creativity is a spiritual one (Snowber 2007), (London 2007).

7.4 Spirituality – Locating the *Dancing-Self*

Extentionalities, as Rogers (1954) calls it, go beyond one’s body and extend onto others and the natural world by having and creating an understanding and empathy for them. They enable one to grow bigger than one’s physical circumstances. This growth can be achieved through having compassion and openness for others, which can therefore be understood also on the basis of spirituality. In the context of dance, this spiritual aspect occurs in a highly dense structure. The physicality from which the extension of the creative mind develops is the tool to express and communicate with others and the natural world. Einav described that after realising this gathered inner creativity to form the movement ‘product’ which translates her mind, she felt that something has changed: herself, the space, the people and the world. This spiritual transformation is automatically contained in the practice of dance. It offers in its nature the access to an energetic force ‘manifested’ with the body and also realised through

it again. This nature can be called the dancing-self – the inherent spiritual act of dancing, besides the observable and describable energetic force which moves one (H'Doubler 1957). These feelings fulfil one and create by expression a satisfaction of release, an experience as described by all dancers in this study. Referring back to Palmer who states that action is the visible form of an invisible spirit, this spiritual dancing-self can be connected to Leila's statement about one's individual way of manifesting the universal creative energy (hooks 2001). Spirituality is the core within the act of creativity as it reshapes the whole of the interrelation between the internal and external worlds. Thus, creativity in dance is both a spiritual transcendence as well as its manifestation in the form of individual expressions.

7.5 Outlook

Goldin-Meadow (2011) investigates the potentials of gestures in showing knowledge or even containing knowledge. She suggests that body movements are significant not only in processing old ideas but also in creating new thinking. This shows the huge potentials of physical expression in enriching the field of creativity research.

However, to realise such potential requires one to rethink the current understanding of creativity. This work tries to problematise this by contributing to and widening the views about the topic of creativity and emphasising the need to research the spiritual nature of creativity observed, especially in performance practices.

Furthermore, as a result of the implemented Case Study, it would be interesting to investigate the abilities of and also the conditions in accessing and expressing creativity from a gender point of view. In the very small sample, it showed that both participating genders had very different approaches towards the given task. This can also be personality-driven, yet it is not to be denied that a certain notion of competition or different degrees of *emphasis* existed among the dancers. A further study on this observation may contribute also to contemporary gender studies through the investigation of how gender differences offer different or similar access to spirituality, especially in relation to the practice of attentive listening, open-mindedness and humble behaviour.

To conclude, this study offers an approach to contribute to the existing discourse of creativity.

I want to offer an attempt of widening the definition of creativity which portrays this wish to extend the understanding of creativity.

On a social level, creativity is the input any and each individual can give by and through their uniqueness combined with the openness and wish to explore further than what is already known.

As this work did – this study is itself a creative input trying to relate the spiritual with the social, the personal with the cultural.

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Appendix

A1 Questionnaire used in the Semi-Structured Interview

H1 Within the practice of dance there is something contained as the dancing-self.

- What is creativity in practice? What is the dancing self?
- Where does the energy for creativity come from?
- Where is the energy from creativity located?
- *(Is this energy creativity itself?)*
- How can one reach creativity?
- How does creativity feel?
- *(What does Creativity do?)*

A2 Content of the Video-SR (Video and Audio)

The data from the implemented Case Study of the video-SR can be viewed online at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zQ_BPNMBRMwcXDAj-sBIHSmTMHiipLH9?usp=sharing

A3 Content of the Semi-Structured Interview (Audio)

The data from the implemented Case Study of the Semi-Structured Interview can be listened to online at:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qujWC242RYUHQ1fLiAMoBaK6Z5YtX-On?usp=sharing>