Chapter 1
Motives, mediation and motion: Toward an inherently learning- and development-oriented perspective on agency

Nick Hopwood, University of Technology Sydney, Australia & University of Stellenbosch, South Africa
Annalisa Sannino, Tampere University, Finland

Abstract

Studies of agency are crucial if we are to grapple with pressing societal and environmental problems. Relevant conceptual and methodological solutions are needed to make alternative futures possible. This chapter outlines a broad position from which the subsequent contributions to this edited volume depart: one that recognises the urgency of agency, and the value of cultural-historical perspectives in breaking away from problematic notions that frame agency as a matter of individuals pitted against the social, or in which individual actions lose their social contingency. Elaborating agency as a matter of struggle where individual and social are in dialectic relations, the chapter focuses on motives, mediation and motion. Within a broader and still-evolving cultural-historical framework, these tenets offer a distinctive way to deal with the challenges of conceptualising and facilitating agency, one which brings alternative futures into the realm of the possible by linking agency with learning and development.

Keywords
Agency; motive; mediation; motion; learning; dialectics; future-making; responsibility; Vygotsky; Ilyenkov; volition; development

Introduction: The urgency of agency

The world we live in urgently calls for a better understanding of agency, and for using new understandings to promote positive change. Increasingly people face such complex challenges and situations that require breaking out of status quo and transforming the ways we have become accustomed to live, produce and organize. Studies of agency are crucial if we are to grapple with pressing societal and environmental problems, not merely responding to them, but collectively striving towards alternative futures shaped by common good (Blanchet-Cohen & Reilly, 2017; Boyte & Finders, 2016; Haapasaari & Kerosuo, 2015; Sannino, 2020b). This is anything but a neutral agenda. Focusing on agency forms part of a critique and corrective in research and theory, disrupting notions that assume neutrality while privileging dominant agendas (Cole et al., 2016). Nardi notes ‘a good deal of theorizing in the last decades has undercut our ability to argue for and promote social justice and freedom. If we do not make commitments, we will not see

results' (2017, p. 2). The urgency of agency is intimately connected with the idea of scholarship as ethically responsive and responsible (Stetsenko, 2021).

Understandings of agency as an inherent quality residing within the individual, or as an outcome of a vaguely defined interplay between individuals and their social contexts, are ontologically and epistemologically fallacious, morally wanting, and insufficient to respond to today's pressing societal needs (Sannino, 2020b). Yet this is precisely what dominant psychological and sociological conceptualisations of agency typically offer: categorising different types of agency, but remaining silent or unclear about the processes of its emergence and development (Sannino, 2020b). Rather than taking up agency 'dangerously' – in the active struggle for a better world (Stetsenko, 2020d) – many scholars work with agency in ways that we might characterise as 'safe', as a matter of curiosity, but not of challenge to vested interests and as a radical means to usurp the status quo.

Cultural-historical ~~theory~~ theorizing was born in the dramatic events of the early twentieth century, embodying a revolutionary ethos (Sannino, 2011; Stetsenko, 2021). The challenge today is to develop and put into use relevant conceptual and methodological solutions in the service of making alternative futures possible. Key to this is the emergence of self-organised collectives addressing basic human needs that are not otherwise properly serviced by the State or by the market – and which can therefore be regarded as are fields or commons of alternative to capitalism (Engeström & Sannino, 2020). We are compelled to radically refashion many received notions, to take a stand, clarify the positions we occupy in the political struggles of our times (Stetsenko, 2021).

We argue that agency is one of these 'received notions' that we need to disrupt – not least in its association with individualism or its negation in social accounts in which the agentive self becomes a casualty (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004). Elaborating the inner workings of cultural-historical theories regarding agency is far from complete (Engeström et al., 2020; Morselli, 2021). We must accelerate the (re)invigoration of cultural-historical theories and methodologies of agency. This is not a quest for a singular, once-and-for all cultural-historical view of agency, but rather a charge to expand, and, where necessary critically supersede, established ways of thinking to strengthen the arsenal available to us in building futures that ought to be. While this requires recognising pressing crises and causes for dissatisfaction with the status quo, this work should not be confined by notions of recovery and response. Instead, it must be fuelled by a politics of transcendence, rebelling against and rejecting that which perpetuates inequality, exclusion, and degradation.

In this book, we bring together contributions that recognise the urgency of agency – theoretically and as a means to intervene in the world. They build on dynamic and future-oriented hallmarks of cultural-historical work, addressing mind and material action, person and society in their dialectical interplay (e.g. Engeström, 2020; Lund & Vestøl, 2020; Stetsenko, 2017). In this opening chapter, we problematise accounts of agency that render it a (falsely) slippery concept, before outlining features of cultural-historical approaches that overcome common problems. We then establish motives, mediation and motion as three specific cultural-historical tenets that provide a basis for distinctive ways of theorising and promoting agency. Each motif gains special meaning, significance, and connection to the others through its embedding in wider cultural-

historical frameworks. Such positioning also gives rise to important connections with questions of learning and development. This is crucial in rendering agency something we can be ethically responsive to and responsible for as researchers, i.e., something that we can facilitate pedagogically. In order to understand the significance of this stance, we must first confront problems in ways that agency has been approached – problems that have led many to be understandably, but unnecessarily, queasy about agency.

Agency: a slippery concept?

Agency is often referred to as a 'slippery' concept (Campbell, 2009), hard to grasp, a source of strain and confusion, a 'black box' (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). But, what if instead of being a property of agency itself this slipperiness were a product of the way we think about it?

Much effort has been expended addressing individual autonomy in its relationship to social structures (e.g. Giddens, 1984; Archer, 1996, 2003). Such approaches do not necessarily pit these as exclusive, natural opponents (Fuchs, 2001), as in Weber's (1920/1965) notion that cultural developments are internalised by people, extending their ability to act. However, they do create difficulties in establishing the need to bridge gaps between agency and structure (Elbasha & Wright, 2017; Fuchs, 2001; Swanson, 1992), a gulf between the individual and 'structural effects that impinge on them in the manner of a transcendent destiny that no one has willed' (Latour, 1996, p. 232). They also fail to distinguish agency as a category in its own right (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), and are susceptible to misplaced emphasis: exaggerating individual independence, or disappearing individual contributions in overly social accounts, where people become robots programmed by social structure (Campbell, 2009; Swanson, 1992).

Despite longstanding critiques, individualistic approaches to agency remain. Many of these consider agency as a 'sense' of our capacity to change the external world through our own behaviour (Moore & Obhi, 2012). The awareness of being in control of our actions comes from an 'intentional binding', linking a deliberate action and its intended outcome to the fact we could have acted differently (Frith, 2014).

> When we make voluntary actions we tend not to feel as though they simply happen to us, instead we feel as though we are in charge. The sense of agency refers to this feeling of being in the driving seat when it comes to our actions. (Moore, 2016, p. 1)

Approaches to agency as a sense have serious internal problems. These include evidence that the 'experiences of agency' can be quite divorced from the 'facts of agency' (Moore, 2016, p. 2), and that the sense of agency is often illusory (Frith, 2017). Despite apparent outward moves to culture and society, the approach leads ever-inwards and downwards, generating questions of whether the sense of agency is 'personal or subpersonal' (Bermudez, 2010). Further problems arise in trying to explain this 'sense' as presiding over both highly predictable actions, and those that are more precarious and uncertain (Lukitsch, 2020).

> If our experience of action doesn't really affect what we do in the moment, then what is it for? Why have it? Contrary to what many people believe, I think agency is only relevant to what happens *after* we act – when we try to justify and explain ourselves to each other. (Frith, 2017)

Reflection on our actions alongside discussions with and instructions from others can lead us to change our behaviour, argues Frith (2014), so we are not automatons limited to reacting to the world, we can change it. While we recognise that reflection can play an important role in agency, we disagree that agency is *only* relevant after we act.

Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory of human functioning seeks to eschew dichotomous approaches and disrupt opposites of freedom and control. It confronts limitations of views according to which human beings react to the external environment that moulds them, by suggesting that people are producers as well as products of the social systems, the broader sociocultural influences within which personal agency operates. Bandura distinguishes direct personal agency, proxy agency (relying on others to act at one's behest), and collective agency exercised through interdependent effort (Bandura, 2001). Such distinctions fail to capture the individual-and-collective *essence* of agency. While Bandura's work does bring human action into view, agency remains primarily a matter of self-influence through mental states, from which historical and material features have been purged. The process of developing control over the circumstances of life becomes unduly abstracted from culturally and historically situated, embodied, material, and productive actions.

Other approaches remain tied to individuals. Campbell (2009), for example, outlines two contrasting ways in which agency relates to the individual: Power that individuals possess that enables them to realize their chosen goals; the power of actors to operate independently of the determining constraints of social structure. The former …

> … presupposes that the actor's ability to act is marked by those qualities that regularly feature in discussions of agency, qualities such as intentionality, voluntarism, choice, and autonomy. However, it does not follow from this that because individuals are engaged in performing self-conscious willed actions that they are, as a consequence, functioning as agents in the sense of "acting independently of social structure," let alone bringing about change in the world. (Campbell, 2009, p. 410)

In the first form, agency loses all grip on social change, while in the latter, social structures are overcome to the point of actions being independent of them. There are no social consequences in the former, no social contingencies in the latter. Instead of being a mysterious 'sense', agency becomes an equally mysterious 'power', where volitional acts fail to account for wider change, and the origins of such power if it indeed acts independently of social structures remain murky. There are clear counterfacts that people *are* effecting change in the wider world, and that social structures do not simply disappear and their forces evaporate in this process. Agency is not in itself slippery: ahistorical, individualistic, disembodied, and immaterial ways of understanding it make it so.

Before proceeding, we address a different approach to overcoming the apparent slipperiness of agency: accounts 'on the side of things' (Caronia & Mortari, 2015). These question assumptions about human agency deploying quasi-inert material objects that are domesticated in order to make sense, giving ontological primacy to human beings (Cooren et al., 2012; Ueno et al., 2017). Following, amongst others, Latour's (2007) work, the subject no longer refers to a human being, but a competence in originating action, creating meaning and delineating available ways of life; a

competence that objects 'have' to the point that they can be considered as intentional subjects (Caronia & Mortari, 2015). We do not agree. There are many ways in which a strong role for materiality can be maintained while preserving an essential quality of human intention. For example, Schatzki (2002; 2010) defends a 'residual humanism' that rejects symmetry, arguing that objects make a contribution, but that contribution 'depends on us' (Schatzki, 2002, p. 117). Nicolini acknowledges the importance of materiality but notes:

> While human and non-human elements *are different*, in that intentional agency can be attributed to the former but not to the latter; such intentional agency does not emerge in a vacuum but within the temporally-emergent structure of real-time practices. (2012, p. 170)

Agency as a matter of how we realise the future that ought to be slips out of our grasp when we erase all analytical distinction between the human and non-human. But, accounts that evacuate all materiality leave us with the equally slippery issue of an ethereal sense or intangible power. Glăveanu (2020) argues that Vygotskian thinking helps us deal with these challenges. Without needing to postulate 'object agency', we can take up a view that agency is 'distributed between person and environment' (p. 346), recognising that material objects are not agents in the same way humans are, and yet, no human agency is possible without material support and social interaction. Cultural-historical approaches offer a means to conceptualise agency in non-dualist ways while retaining a crucial role for materiality that goes beyond approaches of practice theorists such as Schatzki and Nicolini, and presently fashionable human-less (posthuman) materialism (Stetsenko, 2020c, p. 75).

Motives retain their necessary status and agency remains entangled with matters of mind and volition, but it is also fundamentally grounded in concrete, embodied, productive action. In the following section, we expand on how cultural-historical perspectives conceptualise human agency without slipping into pitfalls of agency as an achievement of autonomous, isolated individuals, or as puppets of extraneous forces outside of one's control or even awareness (Stetsenko, 2020a). This challenge is not to be taken lightly, nor neutrally: it is absolutely a matter of engaging with politics and struggle for and over the future. If our theorisations shirk from prioritising communal forms of social life and human development in favour of false solutions to dualism, or theoretical stylishness (Sewell, 1992), then 'it's game over for understanding and underwriting transformation' (Nardi, 2017, p. 1).

Cultural-historical approaches to agency

Questions of agency have long been central to cultural-historical scholarship. However recent years have seen a much-needed renewal with novel theorisations that address agency in its transformative and relational nature (Edwards 2017; Sannino 2015a, 2015b; Stetsenko 2019, 2020a-e) and formative intervention methodologies aiming at supporting agency (Bal et al., 2021; Sannino 2020a, 2020b). Cultural-historical approaches offer an important resource to mobilise the kinds of innovative, disruptive, and emancipatory research that are needed to address the troubled living of our times. In this section we outline the dialectic foundations upon which cultural-historical approaches to agency are built, connect them with an overt and active relationship to struggles for a better world, and explain how contemporary work on agency builds on longstanding – if not always explicit – currents in cultural-historical work.

Cultural-historical ~~theory~~ theorizing provides a coherent but not monolithic means to avoid agency|structure dichotomies and problems with approaches that relegate agency to a 'sense' (see above). Roth et al. (2004) describe agency as a fundamental characteristic of human being(s) that cannot be considered simply as a property of individuals, rather as emergent and situated in social and material interaction. Dialectic thinking lies at the heart of cultural-historical views of agency, recognising that the social dimension of human activity is always present, even when individuals are seemingly acting alone (Chaiklin, 2019) as our actions and being are part of the continuous flow of historical becoming. A dialectic unit of analysis enables us to capture the interplay between volitional action and cultural resources used as means to break out of challenging situations and resolve them (e.g., Lund & Vestøl, 2020).

> Cultural-historical activity theory has a focus on human agency and its transformation of the world. Agency, however, is enabled and constrained by the same societal and material structures world that give rise to it. (Roth et al., 2009, pp. 139-140).

Cultural-historical theories are uniquely positioned to grapple with rising social and ecological injustice exacerbated by diverse contemporary crises:

> Perhaps most important, the lenses offered by CHAT theories remain grounded in dialectical relations that include the consequences of human action, both individual and institutional, and the adaptive and innovative opportunities that humans create through agentic projects with each other and the natural world, rather than as against each other and the world. (Cole et al., 2019, p. 283)

We may not choose the circumstances in which we act, but we need not be resigned to them either (Stetsenko, 2017). Human agency 'can be duly restored without falling into the traps of traditional individualism and anthropocentrism' (Stetsenko, 2020c, p. 66) and the importance of individual dimensions of agency can be reclaimed within a profoundly social and relational view of the self (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004). This directs our attention not to two sides of a binary and how they relate (one under the skull, the other 'out there' as social structures), but to reality *between* human beings and the world, at the *nexus* of individual and social (Stetsenko, 2017; 2020b; Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004). Various contemporary cultural-historical approaches tackle agency at precisely this nexus, including Sannino's (2015, 2020a, 2020b) transformative agency by double stimulation, Edwards' (20170, 2020) work on relational agency, and Stetsenko's (2017, 2020a-e) transformative activist stance (TAS). Elaborating on the latter, Stetsenko explains that while transformative practice is carried out by individuals through their unique, personal, but never *a*-social contributions, these contributions are inextricably related to other people, and thus with society and history: 'individuals never start from scratch and never completely vanish' (Stetsenko, 2017, p. 191). Agency is not just linked to social practices, but is a material-semiotic process that emerges within social practices and makes them possible (Stetsenko, 2020a).

Another key current in cultural-historical approaches to agency is a sense of struggle. This takes us beyond the idea of 'bouncing back' from a stressor that can be implied when we think about risk and resilience (see Edwards & Evangelou, 2019). Instead, struggle invokes going beyond, breaking away, transcending the status quo (Virkkunen, 2006), enacting a utopia (Sannino, 2020a). A Vygotskian perspective shifts the focus away from what individuals lack, and instead

towards ‘investing in mediated activities that enable learning and agency’ (Sannino, 2018, p. 389). Struggle, rupture, contestation, commitment and imagination all imbue the world with undeniably human dimensions, while invoking a world that is far from neutral or separate from us (Stetsenko, 2020a):

> The primary emphasis is on struggle and striving — on people en-*countering*, con-*fronting*, and overcoming the circumstances and conditions that are not so much given as *taken up* by people within the processes of actively grappling with them and, thus, realizing and bringing them forth in striving to change and transcend them. (Stetsenko, 2020a, p. 12 [emphasis in original])

The authors of this book are not concerned with how people merely react or respond to what exists, but in how they agentively co-create the world and themselves, going beyond what is presently ‘given’ (Stetsenko, 2019), and enact seemingly impossible versions of the future (Sannino, 2020a, 2020b). Through cultural-historical perspectives, they ground agency in the very materiality of the world, not as some abstract sense or mysterious power (Sannino, 2020a). While recognising individual contributions, these perspectives also recognise that agency is contingent on access to cultural tools, an access that is provided by society, created and recreated collaboratively and taken up by individuals and collectives. This raises questions of how societies both enable and stifle agency, and links agency to issues of social equity and justice (Stetsenko, 2019).

Struggle is not envisaged here as an object of study, something with which researchers have a detached relationship. Rather, cultural-historical researchers take up the struggle, take sides in battles for the future, and are ready to intervene (see Bal et al., 2021; Engeström & Sannino, 2020; Sannino 2020a, 2020b; Sannino et al, 2021). The contributions to this book eschew passive interest in how the world changes, and work with agency in ways that help to make Vygotsky’s ideas ‘dangerous’ – useful in the struggle for a better world (Stetsenko, 2020d, p. 7).

Vygotsky and his colleagues had a clear activist, interventionist agenda (Sannino, 2011). The socialist ideology introduced by the 1917 revolution appealed to progressive thinkers given its emphasis on social equality, liberation of oppressed workers and ethnic minorities, and social transformation through equal access to education (Stetsenko, 2020d). Agency was far from ignored by or absent from the work of Vygotsky, Leont’ev and others. The ‘rebellious gist’ of Vygotsky’s project requires an activist and radical-transformative scholarship ‘especially on the topic of agency’ (Stetsenko, 2019, p. 11). Shotter (1993) described Vygotsky as concerned with how people change themselves and the conditions of their existence (e.g., also Edwards, 2020). Many see mediation as key to this, although ‘Vygotsky’s Western critics often look for agency in the wrong place,’ mistaking active deployment of cultural tools and creative sense-making for passive receipt of culture in development (Bakhurst, 2007, pp. 71-71).

Engeström and Sannino (2020) suggest that agency has been a consistent, albeit at times implicit, focus of what they refer to as ‘four generations’ of cultural-historical activity theory (focusing on work through the Finnish school of activity theory). In the ‘first generation’, agency is associated with grasping the historically evolving nature and emancipatory possibilities of one’s actions. In the ‘second generation’, agency is framed more explicitly as an expansive movement from individuals and collectives who transform their activity. Engeström and Sannino (2020, p. 8) explain how this built on Leont’ev’s argument that the elevation of goals to collective motives

creates a ‘different fate’ (Leont’ev, 1978, p. 134). The language of a *different fate* again upholds a thrust that is occupied with rejecting what seems to be given, and concretely acting towards envisioned alternatives. The ‘third generation’ focused on multiple intersecting activity systems, wherein features of agency involving recognition and negotiation of deviations, differences and complementaries of expertise positions became more prominent in analysis (e.g. Engeström & Sannino, 2012). There are interesting parallels there with threads in Edwards’ (2005, 2017, 2020) work where agency is contingent on people recognising and working with differences as to what matters. The ‘third generation’ also highlighted fluid collaborations that are reconstructed as the object shifts. The ‘fourth generation’ involves work on transformative agency by double stimulation, where agency has been approached as a means to enacting utopias in heterogenous work coalitions (Sannino, 2015, 2020a, 2020b; see also from this volume: Sannino; Engeström et al.; Bal & Bird Bear; Francisco et al.; Kerosuo & Jokinen).

Edwards’ (2005, 2009, 2017, 2020) work on relational agency pursues complementary but distinctive features of agency. Relational agency is a capacity to work with others to expand interpretations of the world and take action (Edwards & Mackenzie, 2005), explaining how two or more people from different backgrounds are able to work with different object motives when tackling shared, complex objects of activity (Edwards, 2020). Companion concepts of relational expertise (the capacity to elicit what matters to others and draw on associated understandings when needed) and common knowledge (a mutual understanding of what matters that can mediate – as a second stimulus – responsive collaborations on complex problems), enrich Edwards’ account, which focuses on a ‘middle layer’ of analysis, between the system and the individual (Edwards, 2012). The kind of work, often at sites of intersecting practices, that Edwards’ framework captures and promotes is ‘deeply ethical as it allows for creative responses which stem from what is important for each individual, at the same time connecting people dialogically to each other and to a common good (2017, p. 2; also chapters by Edwards and Rai in this volume).

Motives, mediation and motion

The motifs of motives, mediation and motion provide a basis for articulating a learning- and development-oriented perspective on agency. The three motifs gain distinctive meaning(s) and connectedness from their location within a broader cultural-historical framework. Rather than suggesting singular notions of motives, mediations and motion, we highlight different ways in which these ideas are taken up by cultural-historical scholars, rehearsing a diversity of thinking that is reflected in this book’s subsequent chapters. We do not conceive them as isolated concepts, but as foci and points of departure that are useful in understanding agency as a process for change and in promoting agency and its facilitation by pedagogic means (Engeström et al., 2020).

Motives and agency

Agency is a matter of active engagement. It is not contemplative and passive, but an inescapable feature of how we determine the direction of our lives and our relationship to the good (Taylor, 1977, 1989, 1991). This engagement is pursued by ‘non-neutral actors who care and are

concerned about what is going on and what should be' (Stetsenko, 2017, p. 319). It concerns the design of alternative futures (Engeström & Sannino, 2020), initiative and commitment to change (Kajamaa & Kumpulainen, 2019), and how the apparently impossible can be enacted – 'the wilful pursuits of enacting utopias for the common good' (Sannino, 2020a, p. 176). It is deeply entangled with interests, hopes, expectations and commitments to what people believe ought to be (Stetsenko, 2017). People strive because what they are struggling towards matters to them and to others. Agency is projective, inherently linked to the intention to bring about a future that is different from the present and the past (Stetsenko, 2019), or, we would add, to uphold something valuable that is under threat, and cannot be relegated to some kind of post-hoc reflection. It is deeply a matter of volition (Sannino, 2015a). Following Taylor (1977, 1991), agency is concerned with the way in which we set directions and destinations for our action, take actions accordingly, and evaluate those actions in light of our intentions. Motives represent therefore an essential motif of agency as a matter of *responsibility* to oneself and others (see Edwards, 2020), and as, echoing Stetsenko (this volume), a matter of being in charge of ones own lives and broader societal processes, acting intentionally and autonomously or, in Toni Morrison's words, "acting *with consequences*."

Cultural-historical researchers approach motives in varied ways, but share an understanding of motives as something beyond what lies under the skull, extending beyond the individual (Chaiklin, 2012; Engeström & Sannino, 2020; Hedegaard, 2012, 2020; Stetsenko, 2019). This does not negate what matters to people personally, their reasons for acting and why what they are acting towards is of consequence to them. These endpoints do not arise in a social vacuum, their realisation is never without social consequence, and their accomplishment is always socially contingent (Sannino, 2020b; Stetsenko, 2017). An important contribution to cultural-historical approaches to motives was made by Leont'ev (1978), whose writing about the creation of a 'different fate' (as explained early) is directly relevant to questions of agency (see Engeström & Sannino, 2020). While mediation was a key occupation for Vygotsky, Leont'ev focused more on how practical forms of activity give rise to psychological processes, including motives (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004).

Motives represent the very essence of collective pursuits, what in cultural-historical activity theory is referred to as the object of activity, i.e., the reason for the existence of an activity in the first place (Leont'ev, 1978; Engeström, 1987/2015). What may appear as a relatively self-contained goal-oriented action, aided by particular tools, is in fact just the 'tip of the iceberg' in which motives have historically evolved through dynamic activities that comprise divisions of labour, communities and rules (Engeström, 2001, p. 134). Motives are not merely what gives people reason to act, they are the driving forces behind activities, and how they change. When conscious goals merge with the motives of collectives they are not weakened, but strengthened (Leont'ev, 1978), as tasks expand into activities that can transform the circumstances in which individual and collective lives unfold. Motives are produced and brought to life by collective activity. The positioning of motives outside the individual may seem counterintuitive from traditional perspectives, but is central to cultural-historical principles of the primacy of collaborative material activity (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004).

Motives may not come to the surface in a straightforward, unambiguous manner. Edwards' (2020) work has shown that articulating what matters to oneself, and soliciting what matters to

others (producing what she refers to as common knowledge) requires deliberate effort and particular forms of expertise when people collaborate at sites of intersecting practices. We cannot assume motives develop in ways that are isolated from extant inequalities and injustices that frustrate even the possibility of envisioning alternative endpoints, and render unavailable the tools upon which committed actions to those endpoints are contingent (Ko et al., 2021; Sannino, 2020b; Stetsenko, 2020d). Motive orientations that served us well in the past may not function so well as we transition to new practices, raising the challenge of developing new motive orientations (Hedegaard & Edwards, 2019). Motives emerge from the fact that activities develop historically and are practically never in perfect equilibrium with neighbouring activities (Edwards et al, 2019).

This approach avoids the extremes of mentalism that limit the self to mental constructs and agency to a sense, and problems of approaches which fuse the self and context and in doing so disregard human agency (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004). It is core to escaping binary oppositions between person and world, individual and society, and to moving questions of agency and motives from inside the person to the area of social interactions and institutions (Hedegaard, 2012; see also Stetsenko, 2019). Motive orientations give direction to the way people engage agentically with the demands of activity settings and the institutional practices in which they are embedded (Edwards & Hedegaard, 2019). Edwards (2017, 2020) similarly builds on Leont'ev's dialectic view in which 'society produces the activity of the individuals forming it' (Leont'ev, 1978, p. 7).

In Stetsenko's transformative activist stance, we again see motives as central to agency, bursting out of the confines of the individual mind. Her work focuses on *forward-looking*, activist positioning in regard to a sought-after future – what one imagines, deems important and strives for – and commitment to bringing this future into reality (Stetsenko, 2018). Agency is a matter of both standpoints, positioning within wider social relations, and envisioned endpoints. In agency, human beings answer past and current contexts and conditions, but they address themselves and others vis-à-vis desired futures:

> Thus, taking a moral stand, speaking and acting from a commitment to certain goals and ideals, becomes the ultimate expression of how individual agency participates in and is implicated in social life. (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004, p. 495).

Motives extend *beyond* the individual, but do not leave the individual behind either.

A significant line of cultural-historical work focuses specifically on conflicts of motives (after Vasilyuk, 1988; Sannino, 2008, 2010) – when motives pull equally strongly in opposing directions. Such conflicts can manifest in seemingly mundane moments such as the struggle to get out of bed when feeling tired in the morning (Vygotsky, 1997), in acts of caring for others, as parents are torn between following cues from their children that seem contradictory (refusing food while showing signs of hunger; Hopwood & Gottschalk, 2017, 2020), or as multiple systems of activity coalesce and collide in large-scale efforts to effect social change (e.g. in the Finnish Housing First strategy to eradicate homelessness, Sannino, 2018, 2020a, 2020b). In this work, agency is understood as overcoming conflicts of motives that can cause paralysis for individuals and collectives.

Conflicts of motives have been connected with agency also in interventionist work associated with Change Laboratories (Engeström & Sannino, 2020; Sannino et a., 2016), and contemporary adaptations of them such as the learning laboratory (Bal et al., 2021; Ko et al., 2021). This work recognises that conflicts of motives are not simply an impediment to agency, but can be a driving force for change. This is explicated in Sannino's (2015a; 2020a, 2020b) model of transformative agency by double stimulation, in which artifacts become auxiliary motives put into use to deal with conflicts of motives in challenging situations. This leads us to the second motif of agency: mediation.

Mediation and agency

Mediation is a central theme throughout Vygotsky's writing, associated with the use of cultural tools (Wertsch, 2007). The concept forms a backbone of transformative agency processes which are generated and gain momentum by means of artefacts with ~~by~~ which we can transcend what is given and break away from established constraints: 'We need artefacts to develop and to transform the world around us in response to our needs' (Sannino, 2020a, p. 170). Paired with motives, mediation is part of one and the same agentive movement starting from conflicts of motives people experience in constraining situations and enabling to transcend the conflict with the help of artifacts. In other words, mediation as part of a transformative agency process is at the core of the dialectical relation which brings the three motifs of this volume together.

'To understand human agency, tool mediation is a crucial consideration for researchers' (Roth et al., 2009, p. 145), it enables us to understand how the 'infinity of human potential' (Stetsenko, 2020d, p. 5) can be unlocked and made to matter in the world. As humans, we interact with, and shape, our worlds through mediational means, and the use of cultural artefacts, tools and symbols plays a crucial role in our development (Moll, 2000). The importance of cultural mediation in agentic acts that break away from given frames has been highlighted by Kajamaa and Kumpulainen (2019), who point out that mediation is key to countering prevailing educational inequalities.

Humans use tools and signs to transform the world rather than passively adapt to the world's conditions. 'Vygotsky's Western critics often look for agency in the wrong place,' mistaking active deployment of cultural tools and creative sense-making for passive receipt of culture in development (Bakhurst, 2007, p. 71). The idea of an agentic subject who borrows external operations and operators throughout life is clear in del Río and Álvarez's (2007) account, while Vasileva and Balyasnikova (2019) argue Vygotsky's thinking clearly highlights the agency of learners as they interact with the environment. We interact with *and shape* our worlds through mediational means. If we are seeking to understand agency, then people's active deployment of cultural tools is crucial to look at.

Mediation has been central to formative intervention methodologies that promote agency by facilitating transformation of dysfunctional systems, organisations and social movements through collaborative enquiry into systemic contradictions (Bal et al., 2021; Engeström & Sannino, 2010; Sannino et al., 2016). Developing and taking up relevant mediational means (including but not limited to representations of systems) is fundamental to this process. Mediating artefacts can

function first as mirrors that help people to question the status quo and voice conflicts of motives, and then become secondary stimuli to envision new possibilities and design new solutions, a process referred to as double stimulation (Bal et al., 2021; Engeström & Sannino, 2010).

Engeström (2007) argues that double stimulation can elicit new forms of agency, and that realising the radical potential of mediation requires understanding the links between Vygotsky's concept of intentionality (volitional action / will) and agency. 'Mastery of behavior is a mediated process that is always accomplished through certain auxiliary stimuli' (Vygotsky, 1960/1997, p. 87): This is key to a cultural-historical, and specifically a pedagogic framing of agency. In the model of transformative agency by double stimulation developed by Sannino (Sannino, 2015, 2020a, 2020b), agency is understood as a process put in motion in response to conflicts of motives through the use of mediating means (second stimuli) functioning as auxiliary motives. The use of mediating artefacts this way ~~to~~ redefines paralysing situations into situations in which one acts volitionally, and breaks away from (Engeström et al., 2020; Sannino, 2015a). The use of such means draws on the world by actively deploying tools that culture makes available. In other words, mediation enables society to be folded into understandings of what people do (Matyushkin, 1997). This is not merely a technical matter, but an ethico-normative one, if we recognise that 'equality and freedom are achievable with equal access to the requisite tools of agency and self-determination' (Stetsenko. 2017, p. 38). Mediation is therefore fundamental to the freedom to act purposefully according to socially meaningful goals.

The use of mediating artefacts acts 'outwards' towards the world, and in 'reverse' or 'inwards', on the person acting. Vygotsky explained that the use of tools to act on other things, 'radically reconstructs the whole mental operation' (1960/1997, p. 63). For example, a staff member in a housing unit for people with a history of homelessness might use a cup of coffee as a mediational means to escape a conflict between 'old' guard-like ways of working (linked to fear of residents), and desired, open and casual ways of working (Sannino, 2020a). The cup of coffee transforms not only the situation, but can lead the staff member to discover new capabilities for and in themselves, working on oneself (in this case addressing behaviour governed by fear) from the outside-in, while simultaneously transforming the world. This examples points also at how by focusing on mediation, we avoid surrendering the individual to the social (Engeström et al., 2020) because mediation helps us locate agency in meaningful, material activities, not as some ethereal sense or exclusive functioning of the brain: 'The transformational power of sign mediation was the centerpiece of Vygotsky's programmatic attempt to eliminate the gap between external activities and the human mind' (Arievitch & Stetsenko, 2014, p. 217). Processes of agency formation such as this bring us to introduce the third tenet, another hallmark of cultural-historical research: motion.

Motion and agency

This third motif of agency emphasises that this is a phenomenon of a processual nature which can be best grasped if studied in motion. The very point of agency is that it becomes apparent when people change themselves and the world. This is reflected in concern with how people or organizations 'move beyond' or 'move forward' (Edwards, 2017; Engeström & Sannino, 2020, pp.4-5), or 'break away' (Engeström, 2005; Virkkunen, 2006) from existing conditions. The

prior discussion of motives is important here, reflected in arguments that without an endpoint 'it is impossible to move forward, to move at all' (Stetsenko, 2020b, p. 734). Also connected to motives are the perspectives on agency as an expansive movement from fragmentary individual ways of working to collectively designed transformations of activities which enhance collaborative work (Engeström & Sannino, 2020), and the perspective on motive development as a 'movement' in itself relating to changing relationships between people and the settings in which their activity unfolds (Hedegaard, 2012 p. 21; Edwards, 2020, p. 2). Agency has also been connected with situations where objects of activity themselves move (Edwards, 2012; Sannino, 2020a).

We can thus locate agency within theoretical frameworks that are fundamentally occupied with movement and dynamics. A hallmark of cultural-historical perspectives is their orientation towards understanding development and transformation, rather than describing particular states or interactions (Chaiklin, 2012). Cultural-historical theories are a way to understand the world in motion. This manifests in various ways, including a concern for studying what learners are on the cusp of being able to do, analysing change historically, and actively promoting change through interventionist work (Bal et al., 2021; Engeström & Sannino, 2020; Sannino et al., 2016; Vianna & Stetsenko, 2019), and in what Stetsenko (2020e) describes as the radical, rebellious and egalitarian gist of Vygotsky's works.

> Marx and Vygotsky in his footsteps can be said to be advocates of a philosophy of "world-changing" dedicated to social goals of emancipation and equality through social movements with activist agendas... (Stetsenko, 2020e, p. 9).

Interest in agency in connection with social movements is growing, and reflected in contributions to this book (e.g. Lotz-Sisitka et al., Francisco et al., Niy & Diniz). Social movements are powerful arenas for learning how to promote transformative agency and initiate social change (Engeström, 2017). Current work on agency in social movements extends prior work linking Vygotskian and Marxist thinking with theories of social movements, for example highlighting group consciousness, solidarity and organisation in collective learning in social movements (Kilgore, 2010). Barker et al., (2013) showed the value of Marxist theory in understanding social movements relating to class politics, labour movements, revolutions, community activism, anti-austerity, environmental justice, anti-colonial, anti-racist and Indigenous struggles. A strand of formative intervention studies explicitly took up a focus of learning in productive social movements (e.g. Sannino et al., 2016; Engeström & Sannino, 2020). Characteristically, cultural-historical analyses of social movements examine not only the changes in society that they effect, but how they themselves evolve, and the mechanisms of such change (Engeström, 2017; Sannino et al., 2016). The intersection of this work with an explicit focus on agency is manifest in Sannino's (2020a, 2020b) work on forging alternatives to capitalism in the light of critical social problems such as homelessness.

There is another way in which we connect agency with the motif of motion: the principle of ascending from the abstract to the concrete. This builds on an ontological stance of a world that historically unfolds through dialectic relationships. Dialectics are not only a means to resolve false dichotomies (subject|object, person|environment, mind|body), but is a way to understand the world as constantly in motion. This brings us to a third foundational influence in the development of the three motifs: Ilyenkov.

Ilyenkov's (1960/1982) philosophy is one of movement understood as historical evolution and change of human activities. The principle of ascending from the abstract to the concrete maintains currency in contemporary work (e.g., Dafermos, 2018; Engeström, 1987/2015; Sannino et al., 2016). Ascending from the abstract to the concrete means to analyse a phenomenon by focusing on its historical evolution and systemic dynamics, to grasp its genetic origins and basic explanatory contradictions, also called germ cell. The principle of ascending from the abstract to the concrete led to Davydov's (1990; 2008) theory of learning and interventionist approach for changing school instruction, including his work on elementary school mathematics learning. Again we find clear non-neutrality highlighted in Engeström's (2020a) analysis of Davydov's work, which took up Ilyenkov while 'pursuing nothing less than a revolutionary transformation in school curricula and pedagogy' (Engeström, 2020a, p. 36). This is the principle at the core of the theory of expansive learning (Engeström, 1987/2015) and the Change Laboratory formative intervention method derived from it (Virkkunen & Newham, 2013). These links provide an opening for theorising motion – change in human activities, movement to the concrete, and towards futures that are not given – as key of an inherently learning- and development-oriented perspective on agency:

> Ilyenkov's argument may be valid from the logical standpoint. But a crucial issue for humanity today is how common people may conceptually grasp and practically act upon complex phenomena with potentially fateful implications and consequences. (Engeström, 2020a, p. 34)

Practical work activities depend on forming shared, future-oriented concepts (see also Engeström, 2020b). Here, we see connections with the projective and future-realising features of agency that we discussed in relation to motives, and the cultural-historical hallmark that approaches agency at the nexus of the conceptual and materially productive. Three examples help to elucidate this.

The first concerns a food cooperative in Helsinki (Rantavuori & Engeström, in press). The germ cell was a cap on cooperative members, which freed members up from the endless and stressful quest for more members, and enabled a focus on initiating similar cooperatives elsewhere. The group ascended from 'abstract' germ to numerous complementary solutions including reducing vegetable species and field area, changing the rhythms of their operations.

The second example came from studies of home care workers' visit to the homes of elderly people facing loss of physical mobility. Here, the germ cell was the idea of standing up from a chair (Engeström et al., 2012; Nummijoki et al., 2018). This was 'literally a gateway or portal that allows ascending to other exercises and forms of movement' (Engeström, 2020a, p. 42), as the concrete concept of sustainable mobility is achieved when the person adjusts their movements to circumstances, such that the ascent from abstract to concrete was an embodied and material process in which physical artifacts and bodies played key roles.

The third example comes from Sannino's (2020a) Change Laboratory in a supported housing unit for formerly homeless youth. Here, the germ cell was an idea of a new way of working that was less about staff as guards and controllers, instead more equal and casual. Ascent to the concrete included removing physical barriers and using cups of coffee or bowls of oatmeal in the new open space as bases for interaction with residents that treated them not as dangerous but as

agents of their own lives. This is the same example as that discussed in relation to mediation above, and links back to conflicts of motives, highlighting the interrelated nature of the three motifs.

Ilyenkov's principle of ascending from the abstract to the concrete thus enriches the motif of motion. Movement toward the concrete opens up rich and diverse possibilities of explanation, practical application and creative solutions (Engeström et al., 2012).

> The principle and method of ascending from the abstract to the concrete is above all a guideline and framework for concept formation understood as design and practical implementation of "enacted utopias" (Sannino, 2020a) — alternatives to the unsustainable and oppressive patterns of economy and governance that threaten our collective survival. (Engeström, 2020a, pp. 42)

Having now explained the three motifs of motive, mediation and motion, we now consider how these connect with an approach to agency that is explicitly oriented to questions of learning and development.

Towards a learning- and development-oriented perspective on agency

Today's crises and challenges do not have obvious, ready solutions. There is a need more than ever to strengthen agency. This raises questions of what the role of learning might be in the emergence and expression of agency, and how agency might be facilitated pedagogically (Engeström et al., 2020).

Cultural-historical perspectives offer a coherent but as yet not fully articulated or realised basis to understand the role of learning in agency, and to develop relevant pedagogic means to foster agency not just in *response* to problems and crises, but to transcend them based on radically different visions of the future. Indeed, it is through cultural-historical approaches to understanding learning that we can overcome serious shortcomings in other views of agency. Ecological views see agency as an emergent phenomenon of the conditions through which it is enacted, not as a property or capacity of individuals (see Biesta & Tedder, 2007; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Priestley et al., 2015). Such conceptualisations of agency focus on how people respond to problems and act under given circumstances (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Biesta and Tedder argue that 'under current societal conditions, individuals are increasingly "forced" to take control of their lives.' (2007, p. 147). Although recognising the value of such relational and ecological approaches, Stetsenko (2019) suggests they tacitly erect a wall between person and world because they do not leave scope for our setting in place the conditions under which we act before we get chance to act on them. Such ecological notions can also lack the necessary political commitments:

> Paraphrasing Kohn, I would say—show me a conception of agency that operates with the notion of responding to the world and stays away from politics, and I will show you a conceptual terrain tacitly defined by behaviorism and neoliberalism. (Stetsenko, 2019, p. 11).

The idea that agency is a matter of reaction and response weakens the idea of agency as something transcendent, projective and future-oriented. Agency as a means to enact utopias

(Sannino, 2020a) is hard to square with agency as a response under given conditions. The research literature on utopias is moving precisely in the direction of adopting utopias as critical means in learning to imagine and act *beyond* the prevailing system (e.g. Barkin 2020; Bina et al., 2020). Notions of insurgent agency point to resistant acts that manipulate and manoeuvre conditions to achieve ends that are structured as unachievable (Bierria, 2014). While these can corrode structural domination, they still operate within violent constraints of power. As such, Stetsenko (2019) points to radical-transformative agency as specifically about overcoming accommodation of, adaptation or acquiescence to the status quo, including the power imbalances, exploitation, oppression and violence of neoliberalism.

Cultural-historical theories offer a notion of learning – linked to agency – that is not at all trapped in given conditions, and is precisely about what is not yet there (Engeström 1987/2015, 2016). Within Change Laboratories (Sannino et al., 2016) research about learning serves as a catalyst for participatory analyses supporting agentive change processes, through expansive learning that entails the development of new visions and transformed activities. A Change Laboratory is a learning and agency formation journey toward the unknown, full of obstacles. This learning goes beyond the acquisition of well- established sets of knowledge and the participation in relatively stable practices. This type of learning goes hand in hand with transformative agency (by double simulation), which is both a core process and outcome of expansive learning (Sannino, 2020b).

Importantly, cultural-historical notions of learning depart from views in which learning is reduced as a matter of individuals acquiring existing knowledge. Rather collaborative, joint activities are viewed as constituting the irreducible developmental realm, superseding dualisms of person and environment, agency and structure (Stetsenko, 2019; Vygotsky 1960/1997). This is apparent in Edwards' (2017) work that reveals how the production of common knowledge – a mutual understanding of what matters to others collaborating on complex problems – can drive expansions in the ways people interpret situations and the actions that become possible. Learning is thoroughly grounded in collective human activity, through which we confront the material conditions of our lives, break away from them by developing new concepts, and transcend what appears to be given (Engeström, 2016; Virkkunen, 2006).

A Vygotskian approach places pedagogy and learning at centre stage, because these processes are precisely the pathway people follow to acquire the cultural tools that allow for their contribution to practices, their own development, and the world (Stetsenko, 2017). The starting point to understand this process is that learning is always mediated by concrete artefacts or linguistic tools that must be adopted and actively used by the learner (Sannino, 2020a; Vygotsky 1981). This is the very nature of human learning: we need artefacts to develop and to transform the world around us, and to act volitionally (Sannino 2020a; Tomaz et al., in press). Within this perspective, learning becomes radically agentive, grounded in the generation of new concepts (linking back to motion and the ascent from abstract to concrete), motives, and practices (Haapasaari et al., 2016; Kajamaa & Kumpulainen, 2019). There is much at stake here, as we seek to incorporate agency into a theory of human development and learning within an explicit quest to enact utopias (Sannino, 2020a) and achieve justice and equality, by creating necessary conditions under the assumption that this can and ought to be achieved (Stetsenko, 2015).

Because development and learning are thoroughly contingent on cultural tools provided by society, we cannot account for individual or group failures or successes in terms of some biological endowment, capability or innate sense (Stetsenko 2015). We agree with Biesta and Tedder (2007) that learning may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for agency. The accomplishment of agency is contingent on the resources that are available and the possibility of the uptake towards desired ends. We also agree with Biesta and Tedder (2007) that it is not merely the case that people need *more* resources to be more agentic. Cultural-historical perspectives reveals that relevant resources may in fact abound, but transformative agency is contingent on their take-up as particular agentic instrumentalities (for example, as second stimuli that enable volitional acts and give new meaning to conflicted situations, Sannino, 2020b). We remain concerned with the inequities in the availability of the cultural tools of agency (Stetsenko, 2017), recognising that resolving this is far more than a matter of presence and quantity. Indeed, this points to the need to better understand how we can pedagogically facilitate the use of available resources as tools of agency, the development of new tools, and the more equitable distribution of those that already exist.

The work of understanding the connections between learning and agency, and how agency can be facilitated pedagogically, is far from complete (Engeström et al., 2020). The three motifs of motive, mediation and motion also have potential to be understood through cultural-historical perspectives at the nexus of learning, development *and* agency. Taking up this agenda is crucial. If theories of agency are divorced from those of learning, there is a risk that however sophisticated our understandings, we miss out on crucial – perhaps the most powerful – means to go beyond describing or classifying agency, but to actually *promote* it.

Overview of this book

The book embraces diversity within cultural-historical perspectives, and its contributing chapters reflect different theoretical nuances, conceptual emphases, and methodological approaches. In Chapter 2, Sannino tackles the hidden, unrecognized and often suppressed power of hybrid coalitions coming together and contributing to the making of a more just and sustainable world. Arguing that transformative agency by double stimulation (TADS) is intrinsically a power-sensitive conceptualization of agency, Sannino engages in dialogue with and expands on the proposition of power in the sociology of real utopias. A chronological account of two subsequent studies on eradicating homelessness supports an expanded proposition in which TADS can serve a key generating and mediating function of power.

Engaging in similarly fundamental and also methodological questions, Stetsenko (Chapter 3) argues that to advance CHAT at this time of a severe sociopolitical and ecological crisis, it is imperative to amplify connections to the *radical scholarships of resistance* immersed in social justice struggles. Stetsenko builds on the Transformative Activist Stance (premised on Marxist/Vygotskyan foundations, inclusive of a unified ethico-ontoepistemology) and connects to contemporary scholarship of resistance to further the notion of agency at the nexus of a seamless, ever-evolving/moving process of a *mutual self-and-world-co/realization*. This view also problematises reality as a task and gearing agency to the tasks of resistance. Furthermore, and anticipating issues that are taken up later in the book, Stetsenko sets the stage to interrogate

charges of eurocentrism and anthropocentrism in Marx and Vygotsky (see chapters on decolonising, as well as those from the global south, outlined below).

Edwards (Chapter 4) helps us transition from these broader foci to the accounts of specific studies which follow. The author explores how insights from Vygotsky's work on child and adolescent development can be employed to create a relational pedagogy that nurtures the agency of students as learners, enabling them to be creative makers of their and their communities' futures. The case is made for school systems that create environments where teachers can support student agency. The role of motive orientation, imagination and agency in taking forward learners' trajectories is discussed in relation to playworlds in early education settings, makerspaces in schools, the careful use of moral imagining in creating new futures for disengaged adolescents, and responsive relational teaching in mainstream schooling. All four employ pedagogies which aim at the unfolding of student agency and which can be explained by Edwards' now widely recognised concepts of relational expertise, common knowledge and relational agency.

Ideas of motive, orientation, agentic action and new futures are also taken up in Engeström et al.'s (Chapter 5) account of a Change Laboratory supporting adolescents to work on motive conflicts and to construct and implement projects they found significant. Informed by TADS, they analyze the evolution of students' projects as efforts to move from mental future orientation to practical and material future-making. Engeström et al. argue that it is time to make the shift from studying young people's future orientations as private mental phenomena to fostering and analyzing future-making as material public actions that generate use-value and have an impact beyond the individual.

Themes of schooling continue to be woven into discussions of agency, transformation and motives in Daniels et al.'s (Chapter 6) writing on exclusion of young people from school. They explore how young people might be agentic in processes of school exclusion and how might that agency be strengthened. Drawing on the cultural-historical theory of transformative agency by double stimulation and Bernsteinian insights on cultural transmission and pedagogy, they analyse data from a study of permanent school exclusions in a southern English city and connect these with novel theoretical considerations on transformative agency emerging from a wider multidisciplinary comparative study of exclusion. Daniels et al. draw our attention to the concept of the categorisation of exclusions when seeking to better understand the possibilities for young people's agency in exclusion.

In Chapter 7, Hilppö and Rajala maintain a focus on children and young people, bringing to this book the idea of their responsible agency in the context of civic engagement. This brings into focus children and youth's ethical and political aspirations and how they give meaning to their civic engagement. They analyse two examples of civic projects – important forms of civic engagement are personally resonant activities: P365 (centred on a Tasmanian boy, Campbell Remess, who since the age of nine in 2013 has been making teddy bears to comfort and support children battling cancer long term hospital care) and Climate Warriors (a large climate activist group of 15-19-year-old students and teachers in an upper secondary school in Finland). They explain how such projects emerge and are sustained and developed through the children and youth's responsible agency as well as the re-mediation of social and material support.

Very different aspects of schooling and agency are examined by Bal and Bird Bear (Chapter 8) , who focus on hyperpunishment of Indigenous youth in the United States. Framed as decolonising efforts in a settler colonial nation, they describe a specific formative intervention, *Indigenous Learning Lab*, implemented at an urban high school in Wisconsin through a coalition of an Anishinaabe Nation in Great Lakes, state's education agency, Wisconsin Indian Education Association, and a university-based research team. The outcome was a culturally responsive behavioural support system, designed and implemented by Anishinaabe youth, families, educators, and tribal government representatives and non-Indigenous school staff. Bal and Bird Bear reflect on how this was made possible by transformative agency by double stimulation, infused with a decolonizing approach based on sovereignty and futurity and utilized funds of knowledge in Indigenous communities.

Still in the context of schooling, though now focusing more on teaching and teacher education, and focused on a site in the Global South, Rai (Chapter 9) takes up Edwards' ideas of relational agency (connecting with Chapter 4). Rai is in search of dynamic and collective ways of thinking about agency in relation to transformative practice, addressing a methodological challenge of understanding how agency can contribute to processes of making/becoming and hence the need to research 'incomplete' forms of the practice rather than complete fossilised forms. Based on a six-month study of a rural primary school in Rajasthan (India), Rai shows how new motive orientations are formed and influence professional action of new teachers, tracing agency in their designing collective actions to ensure children's long-term wellbeing. Here we find questions of 'why' and 'where to' being posed and addressed in a specific practice context as these new teachers worked with other teachers and children to respond to the complex challenges they encountered in the community and classrooms.

In Chapter 10, Lotz-Sisitka et al. begin a sequence of chapters that take us into contexts beyond schooling. Their focus is a struggle for land restitution in South Africa. Echoing the stance of Bal and Bird Bear (Chapter 8), their work is onto-epistemic and ethical-political, grounded in protracted struggles against colonial and imperial rule most explicitly characterised by racism and marginalisation of the black majority. This leads them to approach agency in terms of dialectical transformation of oppressive power relations via the emergence of emancipatory forms of transformative agency 'from below', by which they mean freedom seeking forms of agency amongst the most marginalised and excluded, where freedom includes economic transgression of class structures, but also decolonial and non-anthropocentric terms such as the absence of cognitive justice or addressing ecological ills. Here, as in Chapter 8, we see deliberate activist and empirical efforts that respond precisely to the critiques of eurocentrism and anthropocentrism that Stetsenko outlines in Chapter 3. Lotz-Sisitka et al. also connect closely with Sannino's TADS conceptualization (Chapter 2), and with other chapters that explore uses of and developments in Change Laboratory approaches (i.e., Chapters 5, 7, 11, 12 and 13).

Niy and Diniz (Chapter 11) bring us to a strikingly different context – that of childbirth care in Brazil, infusing cultural-historical ideas with insights from the pedagogy of autonomy proposed by Freire. They present two cases of transformative agency, focusing particularly on the elaboration of innovative mediating artifacts that contributed to significant change. This was brought about in the first case by an organized group of women who built cultural tools to

expose the excess of c-sections in the private health sector, leading to change in regulatory policy. In the second case, an institutional birth plan model emerged through a formative intervention inspired by the Change Laboratory methodology. Niy and Diniz understand both cases as efforts to promote social participation and informed choice, using mediating artifacts to foster agency. Freire's of pedagogy of autonomy is detected in the sense that these women were able to build knowledge and act on that knowledge in a meaningful and effective way.

Francisco Junior et al. (Chapter 12) joins others within the book in engaging Change Laboratory methods, and in taking up Sannino's TADS (Chapter 2). The context here is an agroecological association, geared toward environmental preservation and social inclusion by strengthening family farming and developing agroforestry systems. Franciso Junior et al. analyse how motives, movement, and mediation interact in the formation of transformative agency. Through double stimulation, participants transformed the way they understood the origin of their problems, and the formative intervention created a space for reflection in which, with the support of auxiliary instruments, the participants were able to produce a transformative movement, analyzing and understanding the structure of their activity, identifying conflicts of motives, and building a new orientation for the future of the activity. The authors describe how this intervention led to a novel concept of the coordination of the association based on the principle of shared responsibilities, as well as to the construction of a proposal to develop the organization.

The sixth encounter with Change Laboratory research comes in Chapter 13, where Kerosuo and Jokinen, where the use of mediational means to solve paralyzing conflicts of motives is considered in the context of homelessness. Unravelling complex processes where multiple innovations were in play, they distinguish umbrella innovations from sub- and stand-alone innovations. These were linked together to serve as second stimuli which provided a joint platform for solving conflicts of motives and for expansive peer-learning. Kerosuo and Jokinen link these wider developments to specific features of workshops that enabled a fruitful movement from limiting situations to future-oriented transformation processes, wherein questioning and and redefining central issues played important roles.

In Chapter 14, Wei brings our focus back to young people, now addressing agency in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically in China. He examines three Chinese children as they acted intentionally to transform their situation during the lock-down in the first wave of the pandemic. Wei argues that despite the constraints on physical movement imposed by the pandemic, these children responded with strong manifestations of agency by relying on a wide range of mediational means, including depictions of a rabbit wearing a red scarf of solidarity with the 'heroes' keeping people safe in such a difficult time. Wei nuances notions of agency with the idea of a process of efforts undertaken to find equilibrium in times of uncertainty.

Hopwood (Chapter 15) outlines ideas of agency as a matter of the direction and reach of action, located within a broader cultural-historical framework, and linked specifically to motives, mediation and motion. This perspective grounds agency in material, embodied doings, and Hopwood shows how they can draw much-needed attention to questions of 'toward what?' our actions take us, and 'how far?' they move us towards futures that ought to be. Hopwood then brings the book to a conclusion, revisiting previous Chapters in order to detect direction and

reach of actions in the diverse contexts and conceptual terrain presented by the other contributing authors.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank all contributors to this volume.

References

Archer, M. S. (1996). *Culture and agency: The place of cultlure in social theory*. Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M. S. (2003). *Structure, agency and the internal conversation*. Cambridge University Press.

Arievitch, I., & Stetsenko, A. (2014). The 'magic of signs': Developmental trajectory of cultural mediation. In A. Yasnitsky, R. van der Veer, & M. Ferrari (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of cultural-historical psychology* (pp. 217-244). Cambridge University Press.

Bakhurst, D. (2007). Vygotsky's demons. In H. Daniels, M. Cole, & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Vygotsky* (pp. 50-76). Cambridge University Press.

Bal, A., Bird Bear, A., Ko, D., & Orie, L. (2021). Indigenous Learning Lab: Inclusive knowledge-production and systemic design toward Indigenous prolepsis. In W. Cavendish & J. F. Samson (Eds.), *Intersectionality in education: Toward more equitable policy, research and practice*. Teachers College Press.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: the exercise of control*. Freeman.

Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*, 1-26. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1

Barker, C., Cox, L., Krinsky, K., & Nilsen, A. G. (Eds.). (2013). *Marxism and social movements*. Brill.

Barkin, J. S. (2020). Utopia and the anthropocene. *Global Environmental Politics*, *20*(1), 122-126. https://doi.org/10.1162/glep_a_00540

Bermudez, J. L. (2010). Action and awerness of agency: Comments on Chris Frith. *Pragmatics & Cognition*, *18*(3), 576-588. https://doi.org/10.1075/PC.18.3.06BER

Bierria, A. (2014). Missing in action: Violence, power, and discerning agency *Hypatia*, *29*(1), 129-145. https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12074

Biesta, G., & Tedder, M. (2007). Agency and learning in the lifecourse: Towards an ecological perspective. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, *39*(2), 132-149. https://doi.org/10.1080/02660830.2007.11661545

Bina, O., Inch, A., & Pereira, L. (2020). Beyond techno-utopia and its discontents: On the role of utopianism and speculative fiction in shaping alternatives to the smart city imaginary. *Futures*, *115*, 102475. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2019.102475

Blachet-Cohen, N., & Reilly, R. C. (2017). Immigrant children promoting environmental care: Enhancing learning, agency and integration through culturally-responsive environmental education. *Environmental Education Research*, *23*(4), 553-572. https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2016.1153046

Boyte, H. C., & Finders, M. J. (2016). A liberation of powers: Agency and education for democracy. *Educational Theory*, *66*(1-2), 127-145. https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12158

Campbell, C. (2009). Distinguishing the power of agency from agentic power: A note on Weber and the "black box" of personal agency. *Sociological Theory*, *27*(4), 407-418. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2009.01355.x

Caronia, L., & Mortari, L. (2015). The agency of things: how spaces and artefacts organize the moral order of an intensive care unit. *Social Semiotics*, *25*(4), 401-422. https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2015.1059576

Chaiklin, S. (2012). A conceptual perspective for investigating motive in cultural-historical theory. In M. Hedegaard, A. Edwards, & M. Fleer (Eds.), *Motives in children's development: cultural-historical approaches* (pp. 209-224). Cambridge University Press.

Chaiklin, S. (2019). The meaning and origin of the activity concept in Soviet psychology—with primary focus on A. N. Leontiev's approach. *Theory & Psychology*, *29*(1), 3-26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354319828208

Cole, M., Ferholt, B., Jornet, A., Nardi, B., Rajala, A., Vadeboncoeur, J., & Williams, J. (2019). Acknowledging changes and the challenges ahead. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *26*(4), 283-285. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2019.1701682

Cole, M., Kaptelinin, V., Nardi, B., & Vadeboncoeur, J. A. (2016). Scale, agency, and relationships: The work of cultural-historical and activity theoretical research. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *23*(2), 93-94. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2016.1176837

Cooren, F., Fairhurst, G., & Huët, R. (2012). Why matter always matters in (organizational) communication. In M. Leonardi, B. Nardi, & J. Kallinikos (Eds.), *Materiality and organizing: Social interaction in a technological world* (pp. 297-315). Oxford University Press.

Dafermos, M. (2018). *Rethinking cultural-historical theory: A dialectical perspective to Vygotsky*. Springer.

Davydov, V. V. (1990). *Soviet studies in mathematics education, Volume 2. Types of generalization in instruction: Logical and psychological problems in the structuring of school curricula*. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Davydov, V. V. (2008). *Problems of developmental instruction: A theoretical and experimental psychological study*. Nova Science Publishers.

del Río, P., & Álvarez, A. (2007). Inside and outside the Zone of Proximal Development: an ecofunctional reading of Vygotsky. In H. Daniels, M. Cole, & J. Wertsch (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Vygotsky* (pp. 276–303). Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, A. (2005). Relational agency: learning to be a resourceful practitioner. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *43*(3), 168-182. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2006.06.010

Edwards, A. (2009). From the systemic to the relational: Relational agency and activity theory. In A. Sannino, H. Daniels, & K. D. Gutiérrez (Eds.), *Learning and expanding with activity theory* (pp. 197-211). Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, A. (2012). The role of common knowledge in achieving collaboration across practices. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *1*, 22–32. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2012.03.003

Edwards, A. (2017). Revealing relational work. In A. Edwards (Ed.), *Working relationally in and across practices: cultural-historical approaches to collaboration* (pp. 1-21). Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, A. (2020). Agency, common knowledge and motive orientation: Working with insights from Hedegaard in research on provision for vulnerable children and young people. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *26*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2018.04.004

Edwards, A., Chan, J., & Tan, D. (2019). Motive orientation and the exercise of agency: Responding to recurrent demands in practices. In A. Edwards, M. Fleer, & L. Bøttcher (Eds.), *Cultural-historical approaches to studying learning and development: Societal, institutional and personal perspectives* (pp. 201-214). Springer.

Edwards, A., & Evangelou, M. (2019). Easing transitions into school for children from socially excluded "hard to reach" families: From risk and resilience to agency and demand. In M. Hedegaard & A. Edwards (Eds.), *Support for children, young people and their carers in difficult transitions: working in the zone of social concern* (pp. 115-130). Bloomsbury.

Edwards, A., & Mackenzie, L. (2005). Steps towards participation: the social support of learning trajectories. *International journal of lifelong education*, *24*(4), 282-302. https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370500169178

Elbasha, T., & Wright, A. (2017). Reconciling structure and agency in strategy-as-practice research: Towards a strong-structuration theory approach. *M@n@gement*, *20*(2), 107-128. https://doi.org/10.3917/mana.202.0107

Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998). What is agency? *American Journal of Sociology*, *103*(4), 962-1023. https://doi.org/10.1086/231294

Engeström, Y. (1987/2015). *Learning by expanding: an activity-theoretical approach to developmental research*. Orienta-Konsultit.

Engeström, Y. (2001). Expansive learning at work: toward an activity theoretical reconceptualisation. *Journal of Education and Work*, *14*(1), 133-156. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080020028747

Engeström, Y. (2007). Putting Vygotsky to work: the Change Laboratory as an application of double stimulation. In H. Daniels, M. Cole, & J. Wertsch (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Vygotsky* (pp. 363-382). Cambridge University Press.

Engeström, Y. (2016). *Studies in expansive learning: Learning what is not yet there*. Cambridge University Press.

Engeström, Y. (2017, 28 August - 1 September). *Expansive learning in social movements* 5th International Congress of the International Society for Cultural-historical Activity Reseach, Quebec City.

Engeström, Y. (2020). Ascending from the abstract to the concrete as a principle of expansive learning. *Psychological Science and Education*, *25*(5), 31-43. https://doi.org/10.17759/pse.2020250503

Engeström, Y. (2020). Concept formation in the wild: Towards a research agenda. *Éducation et didactique*, *14*(2), 99-113. https://doi.org/10.4000/educationdidactique.6816

Engeström, Y., Nummijoki, J., & Sannino, A. (2012). Embodied germ cell at work: Building an expansive concept of physical mobility in home care. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *19*(3), 287-309. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2012.688177

Engeström, Y., Nuttall, J., & Hopwood, N. (2020). Transformative agency by double stimulation: Advances in theory and methodology. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2020.1805499

Engeström, Y., & Sannino, A. (2010). Studies of expansive learning: foundations, findings and future challenges. *Educational Research Review*, *5*(1), 1-24. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2009.12.002

Engeström, Y., & Sannino, A. (2020). From mediated actions to heterogenous coalitions: four generations of activity-theoretical studies of work and learning. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2020.1806328

Frith, C. D. (2014). Action, agency and responsibility. *Neuropsychologia*, *55*, 137-142. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuropsychologia.2013.09.007

Frith, C. D. (2017). *Our illusory sense of agency has a deeply important social purpose*. Retrieved 24 August from https://aeon.co/ideas/our-illusory-sense-of-agency-has-a-deeply-important-social-purpose

Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. University of California Press.

Haapasaari, A., Engeström, Y., & Kerosuo, H. (2016). The emergence of learners' transformative agency in a Change Laboratory intervention. *Journal of Education and Work*, *29*(2), 232-262. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2014.900168

Haapasaari, A., & Kerosuo, H. (2015). Transformative agency: The challenges of sustainability in a long chain of double stimulation. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *4*, 37-47. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2014.07.006

Hedegaard, M. (2012). Analyzing children's learning and development in everyday settings from a cultural-historical wholeness approach. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *19*(2), 127-138. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2012.665560

Hedegaard, M. (2020). Children's perspectives and institutional practices as keys in a wholeness approach to children's social situations of development. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *26*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2018.04.008

Hedegaard, M., & Edwards, A. (Eds.). (2019). *Supporting difficult transitions: children, young people and their carers*. Bloomsbury.

Hopwood, N., & Gottschalk, B. (2017). Double stimulation "in the wild": Services for families with children at risk. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *13*, 23-37. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2017.01.003

Hopwood, N., & Gottschalk, B. (2020). From volitional action to transformative agency: double stimulation in services for families with young children. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2020.1805494

Ilyenkov, E. V. (1960/1982). *The dialectics of the abstract and the concrete in Marx's Capital*. Progress.

Kajamaa, A., & Kumpulainen, K. (2019). Agency in the making: Analyzing students' transformative agency in a school-based makerspace. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *26*(3), 266-281. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2019.1647547

Kaptelinin, V., & Nardi, B. (2006). *Acting with technology: Activity theory and interaction design*. MIT Press.

Kilgore, D. W. (2010). Understandinging learning in social movements: a theory of collective learning. *International journal of lifelong education*, *18*(3), 191-202. https://doi.org/10.1080/026013799293784

Ko, D., Bal, A., Bird Bear, A., Sannino, A., & Engeström, Y. (2021). Transformative agency for justice: Addressing racial disparity of school discipline with the indigenous learning lab. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 1-24. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2021.1969903

Latour, B. (1996). On Interobjectivity. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *3*(4), 228-245. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca0304_2

Latour, B. (2007). *Reassembling the social: An introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford University Press.

Leontiev, A. N. (1978). *Activity, consciousness, and personality*. Prentice-Hall Inc.

Lukitsch, O. (2020). Effort, uncertainty, and the sense of agency. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, *11*(4), 955-975. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13164-020-00486-6

Matyushkin, A. M. (1997). Epilogue. In R. Rieber (Ed.), *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky, Vol. 4: The history of the development of higher mental functions* (pp. 261-178). Plenum Press.

Moll, L. (2000). Inspired by Vygotsky: Ethnographic experiments in education. In C. Lee & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry* (pp. 256-268). Cambridge University Press.

Moore, J. W. (2016). What is the sense of agency and why does it matter? *Frontiers in Psychology*, *7*, 1-9. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01272

Moore, J. W. O., S S. (2012). Intentional binding and the sense of agency: a review. *Consciousness and Cognition*, *21*(1), 546-561. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.concog.2011.12.002

Morselli, D. (2021). A three-levels analysis of double stimulation in a Change Laboratory. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/jwl-08-2020-0128

Nardi, B. (2017). The transformative mind: Expanding Vygotsky's approach to development and education (Book Review). *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *24*(4), 393-396. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2017.1346687

Nicolini, D. (2012). *Practice theory, work, and organization: an introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Nummijoki, J., Engeström, Y., & Sannino, A. (2018). Defensive and expansive cycles of learning: A study of home care encounters. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *27*(2), 224-264. https://doi.org/10.1080/10508406.2017.1412970

Priestley, M., Biesta, G. J., & Robinson, S. (2015). *Teacher agency: An ecological approach*. Bloomsbury.

Roth, W.-M., Tobin, K., Elmesky, R., Carambo, C., McKnight, Y.-M., & Beers, J. (2004). Re/making identities in the praxis of urban schooling: A cultural historical perspective. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *11*(1), 48-69. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca1101_4

Roth, W. M., Lee, Y. J., & Hsu, P. L. (2009). A tool for changing the world: possibilities of cultural-historical activity theory to reinvigorate science education. *Studies in Science Education*, *45*(2), 131-167. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057260903142269

Sannino, A. (2008). From talk to action: Experiencing interlocution in developmental interventions. *Mind, Culture, and Activity, 15*(3), 234-257.

Sannino, A. (2010). Teachers' talk of experiencing: Conflict, resistance and agency. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26,* 838-844.

Sannino, A. (2011). Activity theory as an activist and interventionist theory. *Theory & Psychology*, *21*(5), 571-597. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354311417485

Sannino, A. (2015). The principle of double stimulation: a path to volitional action. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *6*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2015.01.001

Sannino, A. (2018). Counteracting the stigma of homelessness: The Finnish Housing First strategy as educational work. *Educação*, *41*(3), 385-392. https://doi.org/10.15448/1981-2582.2018.3.32025

Sannino, A. (2020a). Enacting the utopia of eradicating homelessness: Toward a new generation of activity-theoretical studies of learning. *Studies in Continuing Education*, *42*(2), 163-179. https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037x.2020.1725459

Sannino, A. (2020b). Transformative agency as warping: How collectives accomplish change amid uncertainty. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2020.1805493

Sannino, A., Engeström, Y., & Jokinen, E. (2021). Digital peer learning for transformative professional agency: The case of homelessness practitioners in Finland. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *52*(4), 1612-1628. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.13117

Sannino, A., Engeström, Y., & Lemos, M. (2016). Formative interventions for expansive learning and transformative agency. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *25*(4), 599-633. https://doi.org/10.1080/10508406.2016.1204547

Schatzki, T. R. (2002). *The site of the social: a philosophical account of the constitution of social life and change*. Pennsylvania State University Press.

Schatzki, T. R. (2010). Materiality and Social Life. *Nature and Culture*, *5*(2), 123-149. https://doi.org/10.3167/nc.2010.050202

Sewell, W. H. (1992). A theory of structure: Duality, agency, and transformation. *American Journal of Sociology, 98*, 1–29. Shotter, J. (1993). *Cultural politics of everyday life*. Open University Press.

Stetsenko, A. (2008). From relational ontology to transformative activist stance on development and learning: Expanding Vygotsky's (CHAT) project. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, *3*(2), 471-491. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11422-008-9111-3

Stetsenko, A. (2015). Theory for and as social practice of realizing the future. In J. Martin, J. Sugarman, & K. L. Slaney (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of theoretical and philosophical psychology: Methods, approaches and new directions for social sciences* (pp. 102-116). John Wiley & Sons.

Stetsenko, A. (2017). *The transformative mind: expanding Vygotsky's approach to development and education*. Cambridge University Press.

Stetsenko, A. (2019). Radical-transformative agency: continuities and contrasts with relational agency and implications for education. *Frontiers in Education*, *4*. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2019.00148

Stetsenko, A. (2020a). Critical challenges in cultural-historical activity theory: The urgency of agency. *Cultural-Historical Psychology*, *16*(2), 5-18. https://doi.org/10.17759/chp.2020160202

Stetsenko, A. (2020b). Hope, political imagination, and agency in Marxism and beyond: Explicating the transformative worldview and ethico-ontoepistemology. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *52*(7), 726-737. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2019.1654373

Stetsenko, A. (2020c). Personhood through the lens of radical-transformative agency. In J. Sugarman & J. Martin (Eds.), *A humanities approach to the psychology of personhood* (pp. 65-83). Routledge.

Stetsenko, A. (2020d). Research and activist projects of resistance: The ethical-political foundations for a transformative ethico-onto-epistemology. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *26*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2018.04.002

Stetsenko, A. (2020e). Transformative-activist and social justice approaches to the history of psychology. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190236557.013.466

Stetsenko, A. (2021). Scholarship in the context of a historic socioeconomic and political turmoil: Reassessing and taking stock of CHAT. Commentary on Y. Engeström and A. Sannino "from mediated actions to heterogenous coalitions: four generations of activity-theoretical studies of work and learning". *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *28*(1), 32-43. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2021.1874419

Swanson, G. E. (1992). Doing things together: Some basic forms of agency and structure in collective action and some explanations. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *55*(2), 94-117. https://doi.org/10.2307/2786940

Taylor, C. (1898). *Sources of the self*. Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, C. (1977). What is human agency? In T. Mischel (Ed.), *The self: Psychological and philosophical issues* (pp. 103-135). Basil Blackwell.

Taylor, C. (1991). *The ethics of authenticity*. Harvard University Press.

Tomaz, V., Sannino, A., & Engeström, Y. (in press). Mathematics and agency: Learning to manage money between Indigenous and market-based logics of life. *Cognition and Instruction*.

Ueno, N., Sawyer, R., & Moro, Y. (2017). Reconstitution of sociotechnical arrangements: Agency and the design of artifacts. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *24*(2), 95-109. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2017.1296467

Vasileva, O., & Balyasnikova, N. (2019). (Re)Introducing Vygotsky's thought: from historical overview to contemporary psychology. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*, 1515. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01515

Vasilyuk, F. (1988). *The psychology of experiencing*. Progress.

Vianna, E., & Stetsenko, A. (2019). Turning resistance into passion for knowledge with the tools of agency: Teaching-learning about theories of evolution for social justice among foster youth. *Perspectiva*, *37*(4), 864-886. https://doi.org/10.5007/2175-795X.2019.e61082

Virkkunen, J. (2006). Dilemmas in building shared transformative agency. *@ctivités*, *3*(1), 43-66. https://doi.org/10.4000/activites.1850

Virkkunen, J., & Newnham, S. (2013). *The Change Laboratory: A tool for collaborative development of work and education*. Sense.

Vygotksy, L. S. (1981). The instrumental method in psychology. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology* (pp. 134-143). Sharpe.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1960/1997). The history of the development of higher mental functions. In R. Rieber (Ed.), *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky, Vol. 4: The history of the development of higher mental functions*. Plenum Press.

Weber, M. (1920/1965). *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (T. Parsons, Trans.). Unwin University Books.

Wertsch, J. (2007). Mediation. In H. Daniels, M. Cole, & J. Wertsch (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Vygotsky* (pp. 178-192). Cambridge University Press.