

# RESHAPING GASTRONOMY

AN INVESTIGATION ON CREATIVE PROCESSES DURING A PANDEMIC

Type: Thesis

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Date of submission: 17-05-21

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Number of characters and numbers of pages: 109.091 characters and 48 pages

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## Introduction

### Motivation

I found it both relevant and interesting to do research on how the corona crisis has changed the way prominent chefs work, as many restaurants has been forced to shut down or focus more on takeaway or find different ways to create both income and purpose. Initially did I think that the research would either be with a focus entirely on prominent chefs or with a few restaurants with more of an organizational focus. To name some examples of how the coronavirus has changed the way chefs work, is one the example of Rasmus Muck from Alchemist, as he started to make free food for homeless people during the lockdown (Politiken, 2020). Another example is the chef Rasmus Kofoed who opened up a vegetarian lunch restaurant with a menu at the quarter of the price of his traditional three star Michelin restaurant Geranium (Politiken 2, 2020).

While constructing this project did I think of the saying that goes ‘never waste a good crisis’. As I find it interesting to get a deeper understanding of how the work of prominent chefs has changed during the coronavirus. I set out with a hope to get more knowledge on new perspectives regarding creativity, food waste, sustainability, sense of economy and so on. Perhaps will this research also tell more about the limitations caused by the coronavirus, for instance less tourists and therefore not so many high paying guests and therefore a need for a different and new concept. On a more personal note is food is a great passion of mine and for years have I been listening to the podcast ‘Bearnaise er dyrenes konger’ which often are about chefs being interviewed by the writer Martin Kongstad. I therefore thought that I would have a good starting point on choosing the relevant people to do the research about.

My thought has been to use the inductive approach to my empirical research. Where it ideally will contribute with new knowledge within the area of empirical research. My empirical data will come from interviews with either chefs or managers of restaurants. I could possibly also include surveys to get a quantitative side in thesis, it could be from chefs or managers, yet another angle would be a survey among customers. As showed with the examples mentioned earlier, did I see different approaches to re-use ones creativity in order to continue to work as a chef, therefore did I find it relevant to use theory about the creative process’, so I could analyze more deeply on what is happening. I did imagine that it would be quite challenging to get empirical data from prominent chefs, therefore did set out to do a great effort on this matter. I thought that if it doesn’t work out

could I contact less prominent chefs. Or I could shift my direction and focus more on the organization and the managers. Generally did I think that people would be interested in learning more about how the corona crisis has affected their way of working. This is something that I can use as a motivation for them to participate if it becomes relevant.

## Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to get more information about how chefs have worked during the corona crisis, as its relevant to capture this information as the time is unprecedented. I wanted acquire this information through scientific methods.

My research question is therefore: How has chefs worked during the corona crisis, with a primary focus on creativity, and a secondary one on craftsmanship, sustainability and economy.

I recognize that this is a rather open question, but this allows for a more broad collection of data. I have previously worked with the semi structured interview, were I had a very theory grounded questions, that was closely related to the research question, this gave me a small and rather unusable amount of data. I therefore thought of being more open in the construction of the research questions this time around. So I could get more data relevant to the research topic. With the method of the inductive approach do I also recognize that it is a process to get the final research question, as the more I get into the data by conducting the research, the more will I also know about ask the right research question. I started out the following research question: How has prominent chefs creativity been negatively affected during the corona crisis. But after sometime did I realize that this research question was too biased. As it presumes that the chefs creativity has been affected negatively, which I didn't know for certain. Although I could see this perception when reading articles and following chefs frustrations of social media. Did I still not believe that this was strong enough data to conclude that there only was a negative relationship between chefs creativity and the limitations coursed by corona. I then set out to work with this research question: How has prominent chefs creativity changed during the corona crisis. Which is more open in regards to the effect corona has on creativity and includes the observation that there had been a change in creativity, as I could read about multiple in different articles. I was though still left with the feeling that more could be done about the research question, as this was still a rather broad research question. I did some more research that opened my eyes to the difficulty of measuring creativity. I also noted that I wanted to work with an exploratory angle as I found it the most interesting to learn more about chefs and their different response to the corona crisis. This process then let me to this research question: What has

happened to prominent chefs creativity during the corona crisis. Which I still believed could be more precise. While studying the methods for this thesis did I get more into grips with using the hermeneutic method as a way to study creativity, through this process did I end with the research question: How has prominent chefs responded to the emerging challenges caused by the Corona crisis, with an special focus on their ability to make creative responses. I really liked the first part of this research question, but I thought that more work could be done on making the second part of the question more clear. Looking at the relevant theory one more time was I able to reformulate the second part of the question. This process gave me the latest and current version of my research question. Which goes:

**How has prominent chefs responded to the emerging challenges caused by the Corona crisis, with an special focus on their creativity.**

I think that this research questions is the best way to indicate the following: my wondering, which is how prominent chefs has responded to new challenges with a focus on creativity. My level of knowledge, which is that I know from multiple places that chefs are struggling to adapt to the corona crisis, and lastly that my research will have an empirical focus. The research questions perspective is defined clearly and has a much narrower focus than some of the previous version, which is an important criteria for developing the research question.

## Methodology

Overall have I chosen the inductive approach to empirical research. This is done primarily with semi-structured interviews and articles. It's a substantial challenge to construct one's research design as some things have to be chosen and others left out. The optimal constructed research design would 100% correlate to one's research interests and purpose. But this will not always be the case and maybe one has to adapt both their interest and purpose along the way. Furthermore is it not given that the chosen research design will give the wanted answers in the end. It might even become a complete failure as the findings themselves are not meaningful or applicable elsewhere, but they still hold value as documentation within the specific topic. It is not possible to choose a research design just for trying to get a specific research result. This would be more of a consultant's report.

Therefore have I instead tried to give my research process the optimal conditions for catching useable findings, which I then use to provide the most relevant analysis. As I'm researching how chefs are working under the pandemic, was the most obvious choose was to create a inductive thesis. As the aim of a inductive thesis it to either modify existing theory, or contribute to new theory, or lastly and most relevant in this case, to contribute with new knowledge within an area of empirical research. This is different that the deductive thesis, that instead would contribute to the empirical field and in a small way also to the theoretical knowledge within this field. The deductive thesis would also require usage of hypothesis to be tested in the empirical field. But I wanted a more open approach as I'm researching a field that has gone through great changes within the last 12 months. This allows me to shift the focus of the thesis along the way, in an attempt to move closer to the actual state of things.

### The inductive approach to empirical research

The four most used archetypes when writing a thesis are: the theory testing approach, the literature review approach, the deductive approach to empirical research and finally the inductive approach to empirical research (Ankersborg, 2020). I'll now outline the different approaches defined by Ankersborg and elaborate why I choose the inductive approach and not any of the other. The theory testing approach aims to contribute to the theoretical knowledge within a certain field. One reason for not choosing this approach, was that I at the time of creating my thesis project, was unable to find any theory explaining the changes in chefs creativity during a crisis similar to the corona crisis. Therefore did I stop from going further with this approach, although it would have be interesting to test relevant theory in the gastronomy scene. The literature review approach aims to contribute to the understanding of a development, shortcoming or disagreement in an area. This approach will be highly interesting to do in the future when there has been created plenty of literature and theory about the effect the corona crisis has had on chefs creativity. As it takes time to create literature of high quality, was I at the moment not able to find a sufficient amount, as this thesis is written while the corona crisis still are unfolding, therefore could I not have my point of departure in a wondering about the theoretical research area, as it didn't exist at the time. Moving on to the deductive approach to empirical research, does it aim to contribute to the empirical field, but also in a smaller degree to the theoretical knowledge within a field. If I had a relevant theory and empirical data available, could I create hypotheses and test them. Again is there a lack of theory, but in this case also a lack of empirical data, making it difficult for me to use this method. Thus is it difficult to

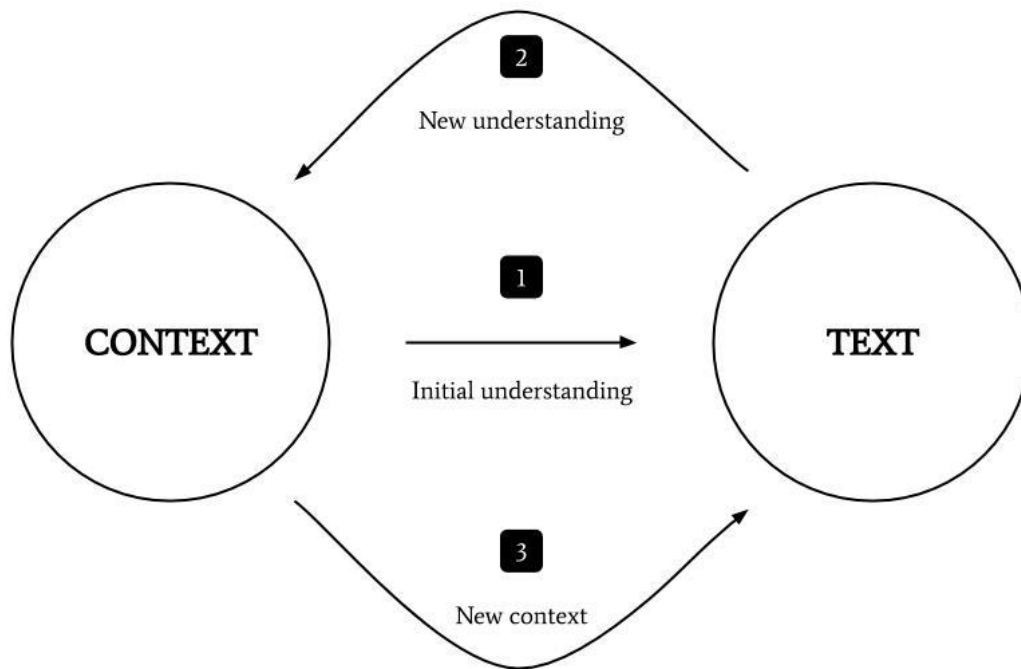
study a phenomenon while its unfolding with this approach. Lastly are there the inductive approach to empirical research which aims to modify existing theory or contribute with new theory or new knowledge within an area of empirical research. This approach begins with a wondering about something one has overserved in real life. I did read a lot about the chefs responses to the first corona lockdown on marts 2020. I was fascinated by their completely different approaches to the same challenge. I started to wonder if there in these different approaches was responses that was relevant to document and analyze further on. As I supposed that the responses might be forgotten or become irrelevant once the lockdown was over. By keeping in mind the saying, never waste a good crisis, did I begin to wonder if corona could have brought anything new into this world that actually was worth holding on to once the world got back to normal. I was keen on trying to encapture this knowledge and I believe that the inductive approach was the right one to do this.

## Hermeneutics

Whenever humans are expressing themselves are their meaning interpreted by others, this can easily be observed in literature, political views, describing a certain phenomenon etc. To be able to interpretate another person's meaning is a required skill for navigating in the communication from one person to another. The word Greek word 'hermenuien' means 'to interpretate' and the practice of doing so can be dated back to the old Greek society. The hermeneutic practice has since been used in the middle ages to interpretate texts of both law and religion. The hermeneutic practice was also used in the renaissance to interpretate old antic ways of expressing and texts. A closely related scientific direction to hermeneutics are Phenomenology, which comes from the Greek word 'phainomenon' that could be translated to what shows or exists (Jacobsen Et al., 2015). This direction started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and I thought that it could also be used as a way to analyze chefs way of expressing their creativity through words.

Hermeneutics and phenomenology are in opposition to the natural sciences which aims to explain things by a causal and effect relationship, whereas hermeneutics and phenomenology aims to explain things by revisiting and involving with expressions. Martin Heidegger and Hans-George Gadamer moved the purpose of hermeneutics to be a foundation for understanding the world and our existence. They did so by including the interpreter and the interpreters existence into the foundation of hermeneutics. This moved hermeneutics from its earlier purpose of being used to understand texts, towards a philosophy that includes existence and interpretation. This has the consequence that the interpreter needs to be aware of their position and that their position is part of

specific historical movement. This would in other sciences be regarded as a disadvantage that by all means should be minimized, but for hermeneutics is it instead perceived as an inevitable condition that one needs to actively reflect on, as it's here used as a resource not a disadvantage that would make data invalid (Jacobsen Et al., 2015). In hermeneutics are the interpreter part of the hermeneutics circle as illustrated below.



(Cunff, 2020)

This hermeneutic movement of using ones initial understanding to interpretate the phenomenon of study, then reflecting about this experience in order to get a new understanding and then again revisiting the phenomenon of study. This is also symptomatic for the process of working with the semi structured interview. I'll elaborate more on this motion in the part of the semi structured interview. Gadamer believes that our preconditioned understanding is a condition that all humans have and we must relate this understanding to the surrounding world, in order to better understand the world. One way of using this knowledge is to acknowledge that our understanding are effected by history, the hermeneutical consciousness would then be conscious about the specific way ones conscious is affected by this history, which would be would Heidegger calls historically-effected consciousness. Gadamer argues that understanding is a matter of negotiation between oneself and the partner in the hermeneutical dialogue. The process of understanding tries to come to an agreement about the phenomenon. Reaching such an agreement creates a common framework or as Gadamer calls it



horizon, the horizons will then melt together once the common understanding has been made. The process of horizontal engagement is a continuum that never stops or reaches a final completion (Stanford, 2021). Language becomes the medium in which the hermeneutic process unfolds and through dialog can different horizons melt together, which will create a common understanding that beforehand could not be perceived nor controlled. The goal of the dialog for Gadamer is not to create one true interpretation of the phenomenon, but to increase the horizons and ideally create melting horizons (Jacobsen Et al., 2015). If look at both hermeneutic and phenomenology do they often both work quantitative methods like interviews and discourse analysis. The both focus on subjectivity and the subjects experience as means for creating knowledge. Further does the two agree on the premise that natural sciences and positivism not are usable when it comes to exploring the spiritual life of the subject and its consciousness, as this is grounded in involvement and interpretation of the subject. But where phenomenology focusses on the structures of consciousness and on how experiences and knowledge are constituted, does hermeneutics focus on the process of creating melting horizons between interpretations separated by time and culture.

As I was wanting to study chefs difficulties emerging during the corona crisis and their responses with a focus on creativity did it seem most relevant to choose hermeneutics. As this could be used as a way to bring mine and the participants horizons closer and ideally for them to melt together. I wanted to leave behind the idea that corona only has brought bad things into our lives, this way of thinking was possible once I tried to remember my historical-effected consciousness. This allowed me to leave behind the idea that corona only has brought bad things into our lives, the unhistorical-effected consciousness could perhaps be said to believe that corona only brings bad things with it, as the main focus of our current history is too look at the downside of the corona crisis. By using this method of remembering of one's historical-effected consciousness, was I able to acknowledge that our understanding are effected by history, and that the hermeneutical consciousness would then be conscious about the specific way ones conscious is affected by this specific history, which allowed me to go past the common perception of how to understand corona, as I now opened my eyes for the possibilities for changes with corona and not the limitations I brought about.

I'll now move on to the semi structured interview as it was my primary way of collecting data. Furthermore are the semi structured interview with its quantitative design, a method that falls within the hermeneutics practices.

## Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview are often praised for its compatibility to a work with a range of research goals. This can be seen by its variance in terms of questions, prompts and tools used in order to get the participant to elaborate on the relevant topic. A semi structured interview will often include open-ended and theoretically funded questions, that ideally promote data in close relation to the participants experience, or springs from existing theory within the topic of interest. The set of questions for a semi structured interview is called a protocol. Designing the best possible protocol is done by reformulating questions and finding their right order by trial and error over time. The interview questions most have a clear relation to the purpose of the research. During the process of conducting multiple semi structured interviews should the order of questions preferably change, as this progression is a sign of the researcher adapting to the experiences from the in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of interest. I made three sets of questions along this process.

Before this progression can happen is it necessary to have the following things in order. There needs to be a clear statement on the purpose of the research, preferably should there also be a signed contract between the participant and the interviewer. I didn't not make a physical contract.

Instead did I make sure that the participants understood my purpose and intentions with the interview by sending them a complete letter with all relevant information. This document can be seen in the attached files. When I met the participants I again told them about my research project and that it in the end would their answers be public available in my thesis. Furthermore did I make them aware that they always could choose not to answer specific questions if they felt like it. After this did I ask them if it was okay if I recorded the session as it would be difficult for me to write down the answers in full as we went along. All of my participants accepted these conditions. All of the audio files are attached as separate files. I thought about transcribing the interviews as I have done in some previous assignments, but after having one interview lasting more than one and a half hour, did I think that this process would be too time consuming and that my resources could be used better elsewhere in the project. Instead have I chosen to use timestamps when I'm quoting the participants. In this way am I showing where I have the data from, so if a random check is performed, for whatever the reason, is it possible to check the validity of my data. Even though I changed the questions multiple times, due to experiences learned from doing the interviews, but mainly from getting more into grips with both the method and the chosen theory. I used the same overall structure for the questions. This was done by three sections of questions. The first section is mainly consisting of open-ended questions. This is then followed by more specific questions that

are more theory-driven. This should allow the participant to talk about their experiences about my research topic. An important note is that the starting section often will produce the richest data as its narrative is more open than the theoretical part. I also included a third section to my interview protocol, as a sorts ending of the interview, where there is space for the participant to think and talk about the experiences we have talked about and also more broadly on the topic.

### Opening segment of the semi structured interview

While creating the opening segment of my interview protocol did I try to keep the following in mind. Making a relaxing setting where the participants understands their rights. (as mentioned earlier was this done before the questions was asked and the recorder was started). Ask broad questions that makes the participants speak about their experiences within the relevant topic. This can be seen in questions no. 1-3 in the first and second set of questions. In the third set of questions is this only done with the first two questions. Put a note to myself that I should remember to probe for clarification, if and when it was necessary. Mentally note interesting points from the participants experiences to go into further depth with later on in the interview. While lastly supporting the flow of the narrative by asking relevant questions at the right times, so the focus of the conversation was about my research topic.

This is closely based on Gallettas points about the opening segment of the semi-structured interview (Galletta, 2013, pp. Section 1, part 2). Galletta stresses that the opening segment is often overlooked but plays a key role in getting the most relevant data about the participants experiences. As it here is worth noting particular details, events, observations, insights and emotion within the narrative, that are relevant to the topic, as this can be used as something to return to later in the interview. It may be difficult to give enough space for the participant in this part of the interview, as one could easily feel anxious when thinking about the many questions that has to be asked, and the fact that an important dialog has started between two strangers that don't know how each other, but has to communicate even though they have little experiences in talking to each other. It is here important to show self-discipline by keeping calm and creating a space for the narrative to unfold in. This can be done by asking open-ended questions as mentioned earlier. One thing not to do, is to jump too quick into the more theory guided questions as this can create a barrier between the interviewer and the participant. Be aware that this does not mean that the opening segment can in be questions about anything, as its important to ask questions regarding the relevant topic, so the participant gets an

idea about which experiences you are interested in. In this way, the interview questions serve as guidelines for the participant to navigate their answers towards the direction of the research topic. The questions become the way into the phenomenon of study as determined by the participant. The narrative created in the opening segment is something that the interviewer needs to nurture throughout the interview, by returning to it and building on it in a reciprocal manner, by engaging in the participant's experiences, this can be done by asking for clarification, generating meaning and critically reflecting on the experiences that come up along the interview.

Galletta mentions that another way to further explore the topic is by using tools and resources that can bring new ideas, perspectives and experiences that initially were not present for the participant. One way I could have done this was while asking question no. 2 from the first set of questions which was: "Who was the first person you had your apprenticeship at?" Here I could have found a photograph of the participant and their apprentice from earlier times. This would likely have reminded the participant of certain experiences about being a chef. Another tool would have been to ask the participant to create a map or representation of certain experiences. I did not do this even though these tools are useful for getting the participant to shed greater light on their experiences and highlight their meaning about the research topic. This is especially useful on topics where words don't capture the full experience of the phenomenon. As making food is almost a language of itself, not communicated through words, but through experiences, did I instead think that it would be relevant to include some of my own experiences about making food in the interviews. This can be heard at 24:19 while talking to McKay where I connect my experiences of making a hollandaise sauce to his experience with molecular gastronomy, in which he learned that to bind water and fat into one mass there needs to be a protein stabilizer, much like making a hollandaise sauce. This then leads to 25:34 where McKay is talking about his experiences of being given the challenge by Rasmus Kofoed of finding a new way to use the algae Kombu, from which he through trial and error ends up making an edible taco shell. Which shows that these tools are useful for getting experiences that are analytically rich, which was true in the case of talking about the experience of using Kombu in new ways, as this relates to questions 12-15 from the third set of questions.

It's important that one critically reflect about the purpose of every question in the interview protocol, by asking if the question is necessary and how it will contribute to the study of the topic. Galletta suggests doing this while testing the questions in two interview sessions and then thinking about the phrasing of questions, their order, the usefulness and overall structure. I used the first set of

questions for two interviews, one with Umut and one with Chano. Then I changed question no. 4, 5 and 11 after reflecting about the process. Question no. 4 was rephrased to give a more concrete answer while also providing a more precise guiding for future participants about my research focus. As I felt asking the question in the first two interviews gave answers that was interesting to hear about but relatable to my projects focus. Question no. 5 was rephrased into being less negative by removing the word corona, which can have negative associations for some people. This paved the way for the possibility that future participants would have a more open and positive sentiment while answering the question, which likely creates a better flow between the participant and the interviewer, as the question was asked earlier on, where it can be negative for the flow of the interview. Whereas question no. 11 kept the word corona in it, but was phrased more open, in accordance with the shift from the middle segment towards the ending segment of the interview protocol.

#### Middle segment of the semi structured interview

The middle segment of the interview is often designed so the topic of study is elaborated in a way that relates to the theoretic focus of the project. This can be done by also remembering and nuancing elements that was mentioned in the opening part of the interview. This was in my case possible as the questions of the opening segment was created in close relation to the more theory based questions of the middle segment. This is for instance seen in first set of questions with question no 4. From the opening segment “Did you learn anything about adaptability?” and question no. 6 from the middle segment “How has the period with corona challenged you and your normal way of doing things?“. As both questions relates to how one acts under changing circumstances, and creates the possibility to talk about experiences that have been made with dealing with this pressure in a creative manner. Dealing with changing circumstances by reacting to them in a creative manner is at the core of my research question. Question no. 6 allows for further exploration into the complexity of dealing with changing circumstances in the present, whereas question no. 4 relates to the same process happening many years ago. Therefore is there the possibility to reattend nuances in the narrative from the opening segment and for instance connecting them with recent experiences, as a way to make the protocol in accordance with the focus of the middle segment, by going one step further. Another characteristic of the middle segment is to include questions of increased specificity, as they are often left out in the start, due to

the fact that over time will the participant and interviewer usually gain trust to each other and some reciprocity will be exist between the participant and the interviewer. This allows for somewhat more narrow questions that fits within the narrative created by the participant in the opening segment. If these questions are asked to early they might give less data, as the participants is less open to talk about experiences but also less able to, as the narrative guided by the opening questions has not been made yet. One questions that could be misunderstood if asked to early is question no. 10 from the third set of questions “Have you done something that first was perceived as weird or crazy and then stopped doing it as it had gotten popular or mainstream to do so?”, here is the participant buying in on the premise that they might have acts that are perceived as weird or even crazy, this questions could be misunderstood as a way to make the participant feel vulnerable, by pointing out special traits that are outside the norm. Therefore is it important the questions before this directs the narrative. The question before is no. 9 “How do you develop dishes?” and are clearly guiding the narrative to talk about creative processes while working as a chef. This way is it understood that question no. 10 relates to creative processes while working as a chef and not about a possible divergent personality.

#### Concluding segment of the semi structured interview

This is a great place to revisit points from the participants narrative that needs further exploration. One way I did this was by asking questions no. 18-22 from the third set of questions, as they relate to questions no. 5-6. Whereas questions no. 5-6 relates to the what the chefs has worked with in the last year and the challenges they have met. Questions no. 18-22 revisits this with a present perspective but also with views on the future.

The flow of the interview starting with the open narrative with a move towards the narrow and more in-depth questions in the middle and the reflective part in the end, shows the broad range within this method. Throughout the interview are the participant and interviewer creating meaning together, the meaning is situated around the participants experiences with the phenomenon. Its relevant here to keep in mind if a story, metaphor or a particular phrase pops up and needs further exploration, as the concluding segment is the place in the interview do so. It can also be contradictions in the interview, that carefully can be raised questions about. This is also a difficult part of the interview, as the interviewer is trying to get more data about participants experiences and maybe even doing so by inviting the participant to talk about things in a way that at least originally was not the plan

for the participant. Especially here but also in general, is it important to keep an eye on the body language, facial expressions and the tone of voice of the participant, in order to get hints on when it's appropriate to move on to the next question. One question which resulted in different but always strong opinions, was question no. 8 in the first two sets and question no. 16 in the third set, which was "Have you had any challenges regarding sustainability?". For instance did Eric connect this with his earlier mentioned experiences in the interview where he expressed, that he for one don't want to serve shrimps any more, as there a great amount of fish being caught together with the shrimp that are not used. This can be heard in Eric 1 at 23:08 Even though this was an interesting point, was it was not directly related to my research topic. I therefore moved the conversation on to the next question. The concluding segment should be less tense and lighter while indicating to the participant, that the interview is about to be wrapped up. I think that questions no. 22 from the third set indicates this, as it goes "Is there anything that you as a chef will miss when society is open and back to normal?". As this questions allows the participant to reflect about our talk about their last year with corona and what there possibly could be missed when everything is back to normal. I thought this was a nice and reflective way to wrap everything up and allow the participants to add experiences that my questions might not have provoked us to talk about. I then thanked the participants for their contribution to my research and emphasized the importance of recording experiences during unprecedented times.

#### Final remarks on the semi structured interview

I have in the previous parts outlined my development and method for creating my protocol used in the semi-structured interviews based on Gallettas book about the method. Galletta calls the semi structured interview a repertoire of possibilities (Galletta, 2013, pp. Section 1, part 2). This has been showed by the great versatility of this method, as it was used to explore lived experiences while also asking theory driven questions. It's important to keep in mind that the questions used in the interview protocol have to spring from the research question, analytical framework and interpretative tradition. Which means that the questions has to keep a certain focus and ideally direct the narrative towards the focus of the research question. This can also be done by using artifacts like photographs or make an experience map, things I have not used or done, instead have I used my own experiences from cooking to create a stronger connection to the participants.

In my case are there not a direct separation between the opening, middle and concluding segment,

but more of a soft transition. Still does the focus of the questions and their openness reflect the respective parts of the interview. where to opening segment has to allow for the participants narrative while still gently guiding it towards the research focus. The middle segment should be more grounded in theory and the concluding part should open up again while also providing space for reflection about the phenomenon. Often is it the case that if the theory grounded questions are asked to early, at which there has not been build sufficient trust between the participant and the interviewer will the participant answers maybe be superficial or not support the flow of the interview. I found my structure to be working well, as I did get a lot of rich data, ready to be used for the analytical part of my project. With that being said, did I twice change my set of question over time, as I got more experience from doing the interviews and also got more into grips with the theory and my research question. This is a good example of the continuous improvements made through exercising the method while critically reflecting about the experience of doing so.

### Why these methods

As I wanted to research with a specific focus on creativity was it relevant to ensure that I picked a method that was appropriate for this. If I had picked a methodology within the natural sciences or positivism, would I have had to have a very different formulated research focus. For this thesis with its specific focus, was it therefore more appropriate to choose hermeneutics as methodology, as it aims to explain things by revisiting and involving with expressions of the phenomenon. Within the realm of hermeneutic did I find the semi structured interview to be the most appropriate. The semi structured interview allows me to both be in control of the interview in a relevant way, by being able to ask theory grounded questions, whilst the participant also has the possibility to take over the interview and elaborate on different things along the way. As mentioned in the methodical part about the semi structured interview, is it often when the participants themselves steer the conversation that the riches data is generated, granted that the participants narrative have been properly guided by the interviewers previous questions, so the participants knows what is relevant to talk about. This requires active participation from the interviewer, which is something that I prefer, rather than giving participants a survey that they will answer on their own. Further are the semi structured interview requiring that there is a comfortable space and good communication between the interviewer and the participant, this is also something that I believed I was good at creating. I also have the relevant knowledge about the topic that the interviews were about. I



therefore thought that it would be interesting to test if I in reality was able to use this method successfully. I set out to create a balance between getting the relevant information from the participants whilst also allowing the space needed for the participant to give away this information away.

## Discussion & Limitations

When I was deciding about which methods to include in my thesis, did I initially have an aversion for doing too much of a structured interview, as I feared that creativity would be difficult to research in this way. Creativity is a not easy to define as one of its key qualities is being innovative and breaking down the normal way of doing things. Further did I recognize that I don't know everything about what a chef thinks, feel or experience, so how should I be able to ask all the relevant questions myself? One could then say that I should find guidance in theory, which I did in regards to creating many of the questions. But given the fact that this study has been made during the worldwide corona pandemic, which has changed a lot of things, for instance with the closing of restaurants due to a fear of the disease spreading further. Taking this into account, is theory only able to guide me to a certain degree, as the current times are unprecedented and their effect on the normal state of things aren't clear yet, as a lot of research about this is still to come. This could then lead me to doing an very weak guided interview, where the participants answers to open questions and I ask for elaboration when relevant. Which would be interesting to do, but also leave me with data that I properly cannot apply to any theory and then the interview will be just that, an interview. Granted that this data collection was to be used in a thesis, did I try to take the best from both worlds by using the semi structured interview. With this method am I able to ask questions grounded in theory and also giving space for the participants narrative to evolve during the interview. It's very important to have a clear and well thought research question when using the semi structured interview. But it's also important not to be locked on one particular research question when one are working with the inductive approach, as one gets more knowledge about the phenomenon of interest along the way and therefore also becomes more qualified for constructing the most relevant research question.

Regarding my skills for caring out a semi structed interview, did I feel that I progressed along the way, by becoming more confident with this method. I also believe that the participants enjoyed the interview, one example of this is the interview with Eric Vildegaard that lasted more than one and a half hour.

If we look at one of the consequences of using a qualitative method instead of a quantitative method, is it that the subjectivity of the scientist is more obvious. In relation to the qualitative method is of relevance to ask if this consequence is so strong that the research will become invalid. In the worst case will there be a validity problem, when the research no longer are in accordance with the phenomenon its studying. Therefore is the difficult thing about qualitative method, that one has to think more about what is relevant to include in the project. This is in comparison to the quantitative method which only accepts data that is measurable and quantifiable. This is the reason for there being a lot more data to deal with in the qualitative method, which then demands a more complex selection of which data to include, but also a more deep explanation for why exactly this data has been chosen.

The qualitative method is not going to bring an objective perspective on the phenomenon of study, for this would the quantitative method be more appropriate. One could then ask what the purpose of using the qualitative method really is then. To answer this question would Karpatschof say that its purpose is to bring about a dialogical presentation of the empirical phenomenon (Karpatschof, 2015). The presentation is different to the representation, which aims for documenting the phenomenon in the most accurate way without trying to effect it in any way. The presentation is not trying to document the phenomenon 1 to 1, but instead works actively with the phenomenon in order to present it in a certain way. This is also why it's the scientists job to ensure that there will be a complete and usable set of data. One way to ensure that the interviewer is doing a good enough job, is to make sure that one bounds with the participant. Given that I have predisposed experience and knowledge with food and the culinary scene was I able to do so, this is compared to a person with no experience or knowledge about food and the culinary scene. Therefore is it a limit of the semi structured interview, that if one does not have an substantial amount of knowledge about the relevant topic, does one then have a smaller chance of getting the relevant data from the participant. Further is the semi structured interview also a qualitative method that doesn't reveal the phenomenon of study in an objective manner, the results of such a study must therefore not be used as objective knowledge about this phenomenon.

Another limitation about the semi structured interview is that one can feel a need for jumping past certain questions, as the interviewer might feel that the topic has already been talked about while the participant was answering a different question. This then adds to the subjectivity of this method, as it's the interviewers perception of things that decides whether or not certain questions will be

asked. This can be difficult to navigate in during the interview, as one is focused about caring on with the interview and not so much analyzing the answers. These limitations have made my data less valid from an objective perspective, but they have also ensured relevant data on the phenomenon of study. In the end have my interviews still created relevant data usable for my analysis, which is used for making hypothesis. These hypothesis can later be tested in the phenomenon's field for instance by a quantitative method to decided their truthfulness. Doing so would also build a bridge between qualitative and quantitative methods, which would increase the validity of my research. I have include a way for doing so in the part of the thesis called future research.

Regarding limitations with the hermeneutics is it relevant to mention both Habermas and Derrida points. Habermas points out that ideology in hermeneutics can be used to reinforce power relations, which prevents openness in the discussion about the legitimate democracy. This is an example of a possible limitation with hermeneutics as it can reinforce existing relations while not being open towards new, but as Gadamer points to in his response, is it important that the interpretative experience remain critical, so the experience also unfolds a questioning of prejudices and judgment (Stanford, 2021). One could argue that a limitation in my thesis is that I haven't worked enough with being critical about my interpretations of the experienced. This poses a possible limitation as I'm not able to analyze or understand the historically effect on one's consciousness completely. This is a point that I'll keep in mind when preparing for the oral defense of the thesis.

Derrida raises question if the understanding achieved through hermeneutics really are determinate meaning. This is relevant when Gadamer trust the authenticity of our own experience to be strong enough to understand something determinate. Derrida's deconstruction argues that the discursive experience is governed by a structure of in-operativity, that prohibit us from understanding something with such determinacy as Gadamer claims (Stanford, 2021). This critique poses a limitation for this thesis ability to for instance claim that it understands creativity in a determinate manner. Which has the consequence that the specific understanding that this thesis produces, has a limitation by the fact that it cannot be understood as universal knowledge. This consequence is something that I likely will unfold further in the oral defense.

I could also have include more methods of data collection than semi structured interviews, articles and podcasts. One way this could be done, was to do a survey that tests some of the hypothesis I have made later on in the thesis. This would give more of coherent data set by using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

## Theory

Throughout time has a lot been said about creativity, I will in my thesis start with a focus on creative processes and the creative mind. This will give an overview of different research projects all relating to creativity and personality, in order to get more knowledge on what characteristics people that are creative.

### Models about creative process

An early example of a theory regarding creative process is the one by Wallas from 1926. Wallas outlined a five stage model to explain the cognitive process. The first step is preparation where one begins to work on a problem. The second step is called incubation, where you might work on other things but your mind still thinks about the problem. The next step is illumination, a step that sometimes are left out, where one realizes they are about to have a breakthrough. The fourth step is the illumination phase where one gets the insight. The final step is called verification, where one actually tests, develop and use the ideas (Wallas, 1926). A more modern model about creative people could be the Geneplore model from 1992. This model consist of two phases – generation and exploration. Generation is called the novel part, which evolves around generating as many different ideas as possible, so the ideas become a mental representation of possible solutions. They exemplify this with Elias Howes work on the modern sewing machine. The problem was that the needle didn't have the perfect design yet. Howe then has a dream where he is being chased by savages with spears. The spears had a circle loop at the end, later on does Howe realize that adding a circle or an eye to the needle was the solution he needed. The image of a spear with a circle on the end was the inspiration for Howes insight, this becomes a mental representation of a possible solution. This is a rather dramatic example, drama is not a requirement in the model for thinking of possible solutions. But it's a good example of the wide range of inputs one can use in this phase of the model to think of possible solutions. This phase is one of two in the Geneplore model. The next phase, the Exploration is about exploring these solutions within the constraints of the final goal. This is done very methodically where one consider the evidence in favor of each and in the end makes a selection. It's likely that there are many cycles of this before an actual creative work is produced (Finke Et al., 1992).

If we look at creative processes with more of an overview perspective is it relevant to mention Mednick's idea from 1962. He proposed that creativity is when different elements are associated together to form new combinations. People who are creative are then assumed to have a skill that can make meaningful and useful associations between disparate concepts and ideas, and doing this to a greater extent than relative uncreative individuals (Mednick, 1962). The ability to combine different elements into new combinations can be negatively met when introduced to a traditionalist or when things are outside the norm, to explore if the participants have met resistance with their creative contribution did I create question no. 11 from the third set. Which goes "Do you have ideas that make great sense for you, but people in general misunderstand or don't understand at all?". I found this question particularly interesting as it could tell if the participant had any experience with making new and unique contributions while also revealing how these contributions were received. This was some examples of theory regarding creative processes, I'll now move on to theories about creativity.

#### Theories about creativity

There are plenty of theories surrounding creativity that evolve around the creative person. One that I find particularly interesting is the one about the investment theory of creativity, made by Sternberg and Lubart in 1995. It's also highly relevant for this study as it connects economic and creative behavior. Sternberg and Lubart argue that creative thinkers act like good investors, they buy low and sell high. Whereas normal investors do so in the world of finance, the creative person does so in the world of ideas. Creative people produce ideas that are like undervalued stocks (stocks with a low price to earnings ratio), and it goes for both the stocks and the ideas that they are not sitting well within the general public. When creative ideas are brought into light are they often viewed as bizarre, useless or even foolish, which typically means they are rejected by the public. Which has consequence for the person promoting these ideas, as they are judged as abnormal or even illogical. Over time will the creative person though persuade others to the idea and after some time will this person sell the idea at a high in order to move on to the next unpopular idea, much like a good investor would do (Sternberg et al., 1995). This theoretic perspective is a clear inspiration to question no. 10 and 11 from the third set of question as they go "Have you done something that first was perceived as weird or crazy and then stopped doing it as it had gotten popular or mainstream to

do so?” and “Do you have ideas that make great sense for you, but people in general misunderstand or don’t understand at all?”.

Another person-centered theory would be Amabile’s componential model, in which she advocates for there being three variables needed for creativity to happen; domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills, and task motivation. The domain relevant skills are knowledge, technical skills and specialized talent (Amabile, 1996). One could say that in order to be a great creative chef one needs to know about molecular gastronomy like it was the case with Mckay. Creativity-relevant skills are more personal factors that relates to creativity, like sensible risk-taking and being open to new experiences. Like the ones Chano talks about he has done in his interview. Lastly are there the motivation towards the task at hand. Where the point is that a person could have both domain-relevant and creativity-relevant skills but without the proper motivation would this person never begin to display their creativity. I quickly think of Eric and his motivation for getting three Michelin stars here, but I’ll elaborate more on this and the other examples in the analytical part of the thesis.

## Personality

Looking at the investment and the componential theory do we see a similarity by the fact that they both focus on personality as a crucial element in understanding creative behavior. Further are there many studies that aims to enlighten us about the relationship between personality and creativity. Even more extreme cases like Eysenck’s P-E-N theory which stands for psychoticism, neuroticism and extraversion, where for instance psychoticism is linked to creativity (Eysenck, 1993). Or less radical ones like Barron’s from 1969, where the relation between creativity and risk-taking was studied (Barron F. , 1969). But in recent years has the five-factor personality model from Goldberg, McCrae and Costa been the chosen one for empirical investigations. The five factors consist of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness and agreeableness. To elaborate a bit further on these factors can it be said that neuroticism measures an individual’s emotional stability. Extraversion indicates how outgoing and sociable one is. Openness to experiences is about ones intellectual and experiential curiosity. The second last factor conscientiousness, has a focus on the individuals discipline, rule-orientation and integrity. At last is agreeableness, which is about being compliant, trusting and altruistic (Kaufman Et al., 2015). Out of the five factors are openness to experience the one with the strongest connection to creativity. There are multiple studies where this has been showed and I want to highlight Feist’s

extensive meta-analysis from 1998 on creativity and personality. Feist found that creative scientists were more open to experience than less creative scientist and that artists were more open to experience than non-artist (Feist, 1998). The interlink between creativity and openness to experience has been so profound in research, that most of today's tests on creative personally uses the level of openness to experience as a proxy measure of creativity (Kaufman Et al., 2015).

The other four factors seem to have a weaker and more unstable connection with creativity, it seems that their connection to creativity is domain dependent, meaning that in certain domains are there a stronger or weaker link than in other domains. This is not only accounting for creativity as personality also seem to change across different domains. There are also examples indicating that the relationship between personality and creativity also differ across different domains. In sum are the connection between these four factors and creativity less clear and more domain dependent. To name one example of this would be the factor of conscientious. Here has it been showed that creative artist are unlikely to be conscientious, likewise did students who scored higher on arts-based creativity score low on conscientious. On the contrary did Feist find that although scientist were much more conscientious than non-scientists, where creative scientist not necessarily more conscientious than less creative scientists (Feist, 1998).

Moving on to extraversion is there a domain-specific investigation about artists and writers, that found some indication for a connection between being introverted and creative. On the contrary did another meta-analysis find that even though scientists are much more introverted than nonscientist, are creative scientist much more extraverted than less creative scientist. This is an example of the complexity between certain personality traits and creativity. It also shows that the framing of such a study can have great effect on the results. As it in the first cast was showed that creative people seem to be more introverted than the general public, but in the second case, was it showed that if the we look at scientists and not the general public, we see that creative people are more extraverted than scientists in general.

The factor with the weakest connection to creativity is arguably agreeableness. Feist found that creative scientist were less agreeable than less creative scientist, and further that artists were less agreeable than non-artist, this was also showed by another study conducted by Burch Et al. (Burch Et l., 2006). Ashton and Lee concluded in 2007 that no significant relationship between agreeableness and creativity was found (Ashton Et al., 2007).

To sum up on the literature about personality and creativity do we for instance in the case of openness to experiences see a strong connection. With extraversion is the connection sometimes

there and sometimes not. It also worth noting that conscientiousness connection to creativity seems to be related to the domain that are being studied. Neuroticism and agreeableness have weak links to creativity. This could leave one thinking that the relationship between creativity and personality needs more research as it shows conflicting results, but given the vast amount of research made on this matter and the consistency in their results, is it more appropriate to conclude that the characteristic of the connection between creativity and personality is in itself complex and for instance depended on the domain (Kaufman Et al., 2015).

I included the five factors to my questions and I'll now elaborate on where this can be seen. I'll start with openness to experience as it showed the strongest relation to creativity. In the first set of questions are question no. 2, 3, 10, 13 and 14 created with the link to openness to experience in mind. Question no. 2 and 3 "Who was the first person you had your apprenticeship at?" and "What did you learn there?" relates to a sub category of openness to experience namely a personality that challenges authority, as the apprentice has a possibility to break out of the norm by finding new ways of doing things. I will though admit that this perspective of the question is rather hidden but this falls in line with this part of the interview, where I create the possibility for the participant to mention experiences that challenge authority here, instead of asking directly about it, as it could hinder the flow of interview. Question no. 13 and 14 from the first set of questions goes "Is there any knowledge you as a chef has gained during corona that could be useable in the future?" and "Is there anything that you as a chef will miss when society is open and back to normal?". Question 13 relates to active imagination as the corona pandemic has been a unique space for people to test their fantasies about doing their work differently, fantasy is a another sub category on the openness to experience personality trait. Question 14 relates to the preference for variety or adventurousness as it open a space where one can elaborate on their need for variety regarding their future. These two questions are also present in the third set of interview questions as no. 21 and 22. In the third set are questions no. 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 21 and 22 inspired by openness to experience. Perhaps most clearly with question no. 12 "Are you open towards new ideas?". In relation to the method of the semi-structured is appropriate that the most theory grounded questions comes in the middle part of the interview. This is exemplified with the placement of question no. 10 that goes "Have you done something that first was perceived as weird or crazy and then stopped doing it as it had gotten popular or mainstream to do so?" as this both relates to investment theory mentioned earlier and openness to experience by the sub categories of aesthetic sensitivity and attentiveness to inner



feelings. Question 13 goes “Do you like to experiment?” which is properly the question with strongest connection to the openness to experience together with question no. 12.

Moving on to conscientiousness and its ambivalent connection to creativity, were the connection seems to be depended on the domain that are being studied. I therefore thought that this was an interesting trait to ask questions about, so I could test if there were a connection here. Question no. 14 from the third set of questions is “When you are doing creative work do you tend to work more in a scientific or experimental manner?” is inspired by this as it can reveal if the chef choose to work more organized and systematic when creating dishes or instead uses an approach that are more experimental and chaotic. Finally on to the personality trait of extraversion, neuroticism and agreeableness is it difficult for me to include these in my questions, as I would prefer to have a closer and longer relationship to the participants in order for me to analyze about this, I therefore did not put much effort into including these in to my questions.

If one want to be great in a creative field is it important, like in any other field, to have an substantial amount of knowledge and practice. According to a study made by Bloom Et al does it appear that this takes around ten years. Another study measured the average time it took fiction writers from their first publication until their best publication, Kaufman Et al. found that this process on average took 10.6 years (Kaufman Et al., 2015, p. 8).

It’s important to note that in creative fields are this apprenticeship not just a basic one, preferably should their after some time, when confidence is gained within the field, be a space for active experimentation and generation of new ideas. Therefore was my second question in all three set of the questions set relating to their apprenticeship. As it’s relevant understand more the participants experience with their apprenticeship and when it was happening. This also opens up for comparing were the participants are now in accordance to the approximately 10 year its takes to master a skill. As it’s worth noting that in the case of true greatness like Mozart, is it symptomatic not to peak after ten years and then decline, instead are the expertise here more like a continuum. Mozart got recognition for his early work, but still he kept progressing to a higher level over time. This type of genius work is done by an elite talent, I claim that it is also happening in the restaurant scene when one looks at examples like Rene Redzepi, Rasmus Kofoed or Massimo Bottura. They have proven over time that they not only can maintain an excellent level, but also progress from their previous level. I therefore thought it was interesting to see where the interviewed chefs are ten years after they started, and if relevant also were they are today. To see if there has been stagnation or progression in their development of their talent.

On the opposite end of things have some scholars argued that when one simply has too much knowledge about a topic can one experience an inflexibility that leads to a less creative output. (Frensch Et al., 1989). This is sometimes mentioned as the Einstellung Effect. Were one cannot find a new and possibly better solution to a problem because the existing solution already exists and there are a state of rigidity. I did not include a question about this in my question set. But during my conversation with Eric, did it occur to me to ask a closely related question, namely if he thinks that creativity in the world of gastronomy ever will start to stagnate, as in theory all combinations of preparation methods and ingredients at some point will be served. This can be heard at 09:47 in interview Eric 2. Eric answered that he believed that this would happen and that it to some degree already are happening. Throughout the interview does he name multiple examples of chefs serving the same dish but with a slight twist in an attempt to use more original and local ingredients. This can for instance be heard at 05:17 in interview Eric 2. Where he talks about a dish with caviar and sun seed milk.

Moving back to the theory about creative process' is it worth noting that there also have been constructed a great amount of research about the possible connection between intelligence and creativity. Plucker et al. concludes, that the question is not about if the two are related, but rather how they are related (Plucker Et al., 1999). It appears that the strongest connection found in studies are when a person is scoring high in the verbal parameter of intelligence. Another point made by Barron Et al. was that there only seem to be a relationship from the IQ level of 120 and lower (Barron F. , 1963). Meaning that people with an IQ of 120 or lower has have a higher chance of being creative if they score high on verbal intelligence. On the contrary do people with a IQ higher than 120 not have a significant connection between being creative and scoring high on verbal intelligence. This result has since been discussed, especially with critical points regarding the methods of study and its study group. Even though this connection could be an interesting point to test further in the field, did I not feel comfortable with doing so for several reasons. As I am not comfortable with asking people about the their IQ, nor am I able to or qualified to do a test to find out the participants IQ. Therefore have I not made questions regarding this, but I note that it's an interesting connection that generally needs to be made more research on.

## Creative contributions

I thought that it would be both interesting and relevant to include a theory that organizes creative contributions among multiple people. So that I could make a visual representation that shows where the chefs that I have interviewed fit on a creative scale. This is a rather challenging task, as there are no fixed way to evaluate the amount of creativity or its quality. But looking at Sternberg Et al.'s model on the eight types of creative contribution, did I think that it would be usable for this case, especially if I used my interviews as data sets for the chefs respective creative contributions.

## Definition of the 8 types of creativity

### **The first four types of creativity accept current paradigms and attempt to extend them.**

1. *Replication*. The contribution acknowledge that the specific field is on the right track at its current state. The propulsion is more about preserving status quo than changing it.
2. *Redefinition*. The contribution is trying to redefine the specific field by seeing it from a different perspective. The propulsion is a circular motion leading back to the field but with a new perspective
3. *Forward Incrementation*. The contribution is trying to pull the field forward while remaining the same direction as the original point of the departure. The propulsion moves forward.
4. *Advance Forward Incrementation*. The contribution is trying to pull the field forward in the original direction but does so to an extend that is beyond others. The propulsion moves forward in an accelerated manner that are higher than the expectations.

### **The next three types of creativity reject current paradigms and attempt to replace them.**

5. *Redirection*. The contribution is trying to redirect the field away from its current direction into a different one. The propulsion moves to a new direction different that the current.
6. *Reconstruction/Redirection*. The contribution is trying to move the field back to where it ones was, and then moves it in a different direction from that point. The propulsion first moves backwards and then forward in a new directive way.

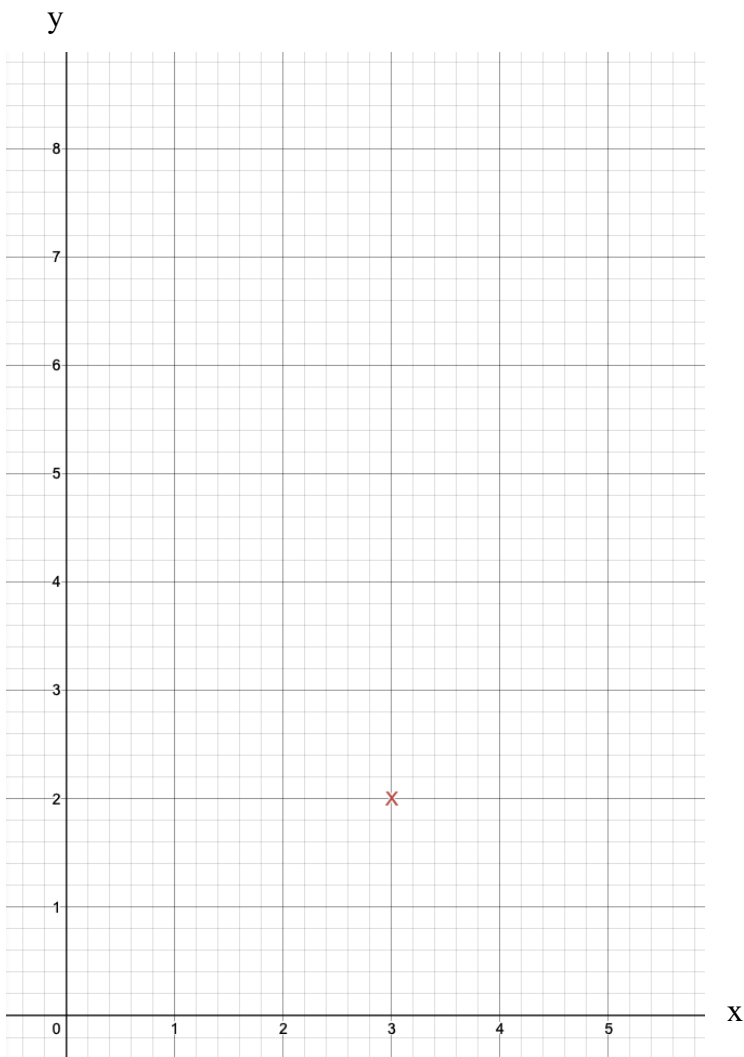
7. *Reinitiation*. The contribution is trying to move the field to a unreached starting point and then moves from there. The propulsion is starting from a new place and moving in a new direction.

**The last type of creativity synthesizes current paradigms**

8. *Synthesis*. The contribution is trying to integrate different creative contributions.

(Kaufman Et al., 2015, pp. 10-11).

Using this model am I hoping be able to make a two dimensional coordinate system, where the x value represented each chef/participant and the y value represented their type of creative contributions grounded in the 8 type model. As you can see beneath, in this hypothetical example, is it showing that participant no. 3 have made creative contributions that are representative to those on level 2 of the 8 type model.



By using this theory will I then be able to create a map that shows the creative contributions and their numeric value, which is a way to quantify the qualitative data into quantitative data, but I want to stress that a higher number does not mean that one is more creative than a person with a lower number. The numbers can instead for instance be used to show the variance of creative contribution among the participants.

#### Final remarks regarding theory

The theoretic part of my thesis have explored what creativity is, the characteristics of creative people and a systematic approach to organizing creative contributions. Throughout this part have I visited several theories and empirical data testing these theories, in order to give a comprehensive theoretical view on creativity. It can from this be said that creativity is a rather complex

phenomenon to study and one that provides the following challenges. It is only possible to define creativity in relative terms, meaning that an act in domain can be perceived as creative, whereas in another domain the same act would be perceived as uncreative. This brings us on to the challenge with measuring creativity. As there are no widely accepted methods for this, one could then think that the 8 type model could be used for this, thinking that creative contributions on level 1 is less creative than contributions on level 7. But I highly advocate to not look at things this way, but more that the 8 type model in my thesis is used for a way to relate one person's creative contribution to another person's creative contribution, so these creative contributions can be put in relation to each other, but not for the purpose of deciding which one is more creative than the other. It will instead give a different perspective on where the chefs creative contributions are placed in relation to each other and as a whole according to the 8 type model. This map could then be said to be part of the hermeneutic circle regarding chefs creative contributions.

## Investigation

I have used the semi structured interview as the main method for collecting data in this thesis. I have in total collected five interviews. I contacted the relevant participants by social media primarily on Instagram. As expected did I not get a response for everyone I reached out to, but I'm very satisfied with the five that I got the interview with. As these five participants are very different to each other and should therefore provide very different perspectives on the same research question. The first interview was conducted with celebrity chef Umut Sakarya. The second is with chef Chano Jørgensen. The third interview is with celebrity chef Casper Sobczyk. The fourth interview is with chef Eric Vildgaard and the last is with chef McKay Wilday. In sum are the chefs making food in very different ways, some are clearly traditional like Umut and Chano. While others like Casper and McKay bring classic dishes to a new level or even invent new combinations. Finally is there Eric, which must be said to be in a class of his own. His restaurant called Jordnær has gotten worldwide recognition with the two Michelin stars it got in 2020. Eric is radical in many of his approach on how to run a restaurant. Eric did for instance reveal in the interview that they are going for three stars, but not only that, he wants to achieve this while being closed for business during the weekend, which normally are the peak hours for a Michelin restaurant. In this way can

he and his wife spend more time together with their children, as he believes having quality time with his children makes him a better chef. This can be heard at Eric 1 at 28:20.

## Findings & Analysis

### Umut Sakarya

Umut is a 30 year old chef and restaurant owner of Guldkroen, Guldgrillen and 2x Guldkebab. The interview was held at Guldkroen.

Umut was very communicative about his experiences of finding new solutions to cope with the challenges the corona crisis has created. This was for instance the case when he was asked the question no. 6 from the first set of questions, that goes: How has the period with corona challenged you and your normal way of doing things? He was asked the question at 05:20 but at 08:00 does he open up about a new product that has been created during the corona period. The product is cold takeaway, which at initially sounds like a small change, but it has a lot of positive effects on the business. For instance does the people order the takeaway two days in advance. This allows Umut to better prepare the process of making the food. He knows exactly the amount of food he needs to make and can thus minimize waste, which is both good for the environment and the business economy. Umut also emphasizes that the quality of the food will be significantly higher when the customers finishing the last 10% of making the meal in their own home. In this way will it for instance not be possible to have French fries that have gotten soft through the transportation process. Umut believes that with this concept are the customers getting a restaurant quality of food in their own home, which was not possible before. The customers can also pick up the food at lunch time but choose to serve it at dinner time the next day, which gives an increased flexibility at the customer end. The customer also gets an experience with making food as they have to participate in the process of creating the meal, whereas in takeaway are one usually removed from this process. The new product type of cold takeaway and its benefits are a result of going through the corona pandemic and being forced to work with challenges it created. This is an example of something good coming out of the crisis.

When Umut was asked the question no. 13 from the first set of questions, that goes: "Is there any knowledge you as a chef has gained during corona that could be useable in the future?". Did he answer that two things has been valuable, this can be heard in his interview at 31:49. First the new takeaway concept mentioned above. Secondly that he has gained a better relationship with his

suppliers. This has happened through a feeling of being in the crisis together, as the supplier doesn't earn money when Umut can't sell food he normally does. Normally does Umut for instance order the specific meat that he needs, but in the corona crisis with a bigger focus on takeaway has Umut and his suppliers turned this motion the other way around. As Umut now asks the supplier what he has available and makes then creates takeaway dishes from what is available. At 32:40 does Umut elaborate that this experience has enhanced the community feeling among him and his suppliers. Further has this also allowed Umut to be more competitive in regards to pricing, as he can get a quality product at a lower price. The ability to do such a thing requires one to be open to experience both of the new products but also about the challenge it is to making a delicious meal out of the new product. This is an indication that Umut is a creative person as the connection between creativity and openness to experience are the strongest among the five personality traits.

### Chano Jørgensen

Chano is a 25 year old chef who used to work at Guld Kroen owned by Umut Sakarya. He was let go of the position in January 2021 due to the second round of lockdown. This was the only online interview.

When Chano was asked the question no. 6 from the first set of questions, that goes: How has the period with corona challenged you and your normal way of doing things?. He answered that after he was let go from Guld Kroen, has he challenged himself to do new things that are unrelated to being a chef. This can be heard at 04:24. Chano mentions that he has done a lot of radio, podcasts and videos on Instagram. This way of using ones creativity to create new products or creative ideas reminds me of Mednicks idea from 1962 about creative processes, where he proposed that creativity is when different elements are associated together to form new combinations. And that people who are creative are assumed to have a skill that can make meaningful and useful associates between disparate concepts and ideas, and doing this to a greater extent than relative uncreative individuals. Connecting this with Chano's new way of finding purpose is it interesting to follow concepts that he involve himself in, as a they are a way to deal with the challenges that has emerged from the corona crisis, namely that he lost his job. This move into new things are indications of him finding new ways of being creative.



### Casper Sobczyk

Casper is a 32 year old chef and is currently the head chef at restaurant Cappa. This interview was conducted at Cappa.

At 6:32 does Casper bring to talk about an Instagram story that he has made earlier in the day, in which he gives a sleeping homeless man a bag of food. This was not in response to one of my questions but something that happened spontaneous. I would argue that act of giving a random person a bag of food, mainly are done by people who are extraverted, as the act evolves around contact to a complete stranger. The connection between being extraverted and creative are muddled and domain depended as mentioned earlier. Therefore is it interesting to remember Casper's trait of being extraverted when it is compared to his creative contribution, as this can give indication if there in this domain seem to be a consistent relation between be creativity and extraverted.

When Casper was asked the question no. 14 from the second set of questions, that goes: Is there anything that you as a chef will miss when society is open and back to normal? Casper answered that he was afraid to lose his family again, as he has had more time in the last year to spend time with his family, this can be heard at 13:10. Throughout the interview does Casper talk about different ways he has worked in the during the corona crisis. One of them being home, developing dishes and writing cookbooks while also being there for his family. It would be interesting in the future to test if Casper and other chefs that have had a similar experience, still are able to work from home and spending time with their family or if they fall into the old habits of working more away from home.

### Eric Vildegaard

Eric is a 37 year old chef and restaurant owner of restaurant Jordnær, which currently has two Michelin stars. The interview was held at restaurant Jordnær in Gentofte.

When Eric was asked question no. 10 from the third set of questions "Have you done something that first was perceived as weird or crazy and then stopped doing it as it had gotten popular or mainstream to do so?" was this related to the creative person acting like an investor that buy low and sells high, but instead of a stock is it here the creative idea. Eric can be heard in Eric 2 at 00:20 confirming that this actually happens. Eric then goes on to name an example with cold brewed tea that Jordnær was the first restaurant to have. All the other danish restaurants were at the time only serving a juice parring as the only nonalcoholic option. This trend with cold brewed tea has since

then caught on in many prominent restaurants, one example is the kelp water at geranium, which is tea made with the algae kombu. During the interview with Eric, did Eric serve a nonalcoholic drink called Vandkefir from Mytebryg, which then shows that Eric already is trying to find his next stock/creative idea in regards to finding a unique nonalcoholic drink.

In the interview with Eric 2 at 11:04, did I bound with Eric about his decision of not serving meat in the restaurant, by saying that we do not need to learn or be inspired about a delicious chicken, as we properly already know how to do this, instead should chefs of his class inspire us to eat vegetables in a new way, as it much more difficult turning a bean into a delicious meal than it is with a chicken. This is an example of me bounding with the participant by using my own knowledge and are an argument for viewing me as a succesfull interviewer.

### McKay Wilday

McKay is a chef at restaurant Geranium, which currently has three Michelin stars. This interview was conducted at a park called Østre Anlæg.

McKay leaves the impression through the interview that he likes to experiment while creating both simple and complex dishes. He mentioned numerous examples, one of the more simple was that he likes to make pancakes every weekend, he sticks to using the same ingredients, but changes the ratio, the quality of product and so on every time. By working this way does he have a 100 different ways to make pancakes all in his notes in his phone, the point of this is to find the perfect recipe for making pancakes. This can be heard several places in the interview but mainly from 24:30. Another example perhaps a bit more demanding on the use of creativity, is when he was given the challenge by Rasmus Kofoed to find a use for an expensive algae called Kombu, which has first been used to create Kelp water. At 25:09 does McKay begin to talk about being giving this challenge. His experience reminds me of the Geneplore model, first he talks about the trial and error process with going through numerous ways to create a usable product. This reminds of the Geneplore model and its generation process, where one creates as many ideas as possible. After this process does McKay do a very methodical analysis on the different products to find out the best result. This is similar to the second part of the Geneplore model were one considers the evidence in favor of each and in the end makes a selection. This level of commitment and the continues drive for working with the same task, is something I would analyze to being a personality trait similar to conscientious. As mentioned in the theoretic part does conscientious have a mixed relationship with being connected

to creativity. In most cases are creative people less conscientious. This actually goes along with the point that McKay may not be most creative chef in terms of creating new dishes all the way from the bottom, as he says at 16:30. McKay rather tweaks the dish with some few twists and makes it 10-20% better, something that also requires creativity but arguably less so than creating the entire dish from scratch.

When McKay was asked question no. 10 from the third set of questions “Have you done something that first was perceived as weird or crazy and then stopped doing it as it had gotten popular or mainstream to do so?” was this related to the creative person acting like an investor that buy low and sells high, but instead of a stock is it here the creative idea. McKay answers this questions in his interview at 18:57, the interesting thing is that he says the answer is himself instead of naming examples with other people. He elaborates on this by saying that he has brilliant ideas in his head but that they often don’t work out in reality. This gives me evidence to believe that he has an introverted personality, as this process seems to be going on in his own head instead of mentioning examples with other people.

At 17:48 does McKay gives an impression that he is very open to new experiences as he has the ability to connect with chefs at the top level when they are developing new dishes. The openness to experience are seen when he uncritically joins the chefs vision for the new dish, understands the vision and in the end are able to make a response that speaks to the chefs vision. This is a case for there being a connection between openness to experience and creativity. Another example of McKays level of openness to experiences is when he talks about exploring and experiencing nature during the lockdown, as this is an example of being open to explore new things, when arising challenges prevents us for living our normal life.

### Map of creative contributions

I earlier mentioned that I wanted to make a map that represents the participants creative contribution. Starting with Umut did I find that his work has elements of no. 2, 3 and 4 or Redefinition, Forward Incrementation and Advance Forward Incrementation from the 8 type model. Umut has been very successful in redefining the classic danish cuisine, he has done so by not compromising on amount of ingredients used, especially those that generally are considered unhealthy, but also has the benefit of adding intense flavor. This redefinition fits well with no. 2. Arguably could the movement towards this already have been said to happen with other restaurants

also focusing on making classic danish food with a huge focus on ingredients that some dietist's have nightmares about, this would then put him at no. 3. Considering Umut success with the new cold takeaway format, his four restaurants, some of which are fully booked many months ahead and a strong brand that also sells everything from clothing to alcohol, could he also be give the value 4, as his creative contributions must be said to move in an already defined direction (classic danish cuisine) but in a more extreme and successful manner than others have been able to do.

The case of Chano is interesting regarding creative contributions, but as the scope of my research focusses is on creative responses made during the look down within the culinary scene, can I only allow myself to analyze on the things related to gastronomy. Given the fact that Chano was let go in January 2021 will I therefore in this part only analyze his creative contributions made when he was actively working as a chef. Given that he back then was working as a chef for Umut at Guld Kroen and made the same food every day while not creating any new dishes or tweaking them in any way, as it was Umut who decided how the dishes was made. Taking this into consideration do I think that Chano's creative contribution is closes to no. 1 called Replication, which is defined as a stationary movement and a recognition that the field is moving in the right direction.

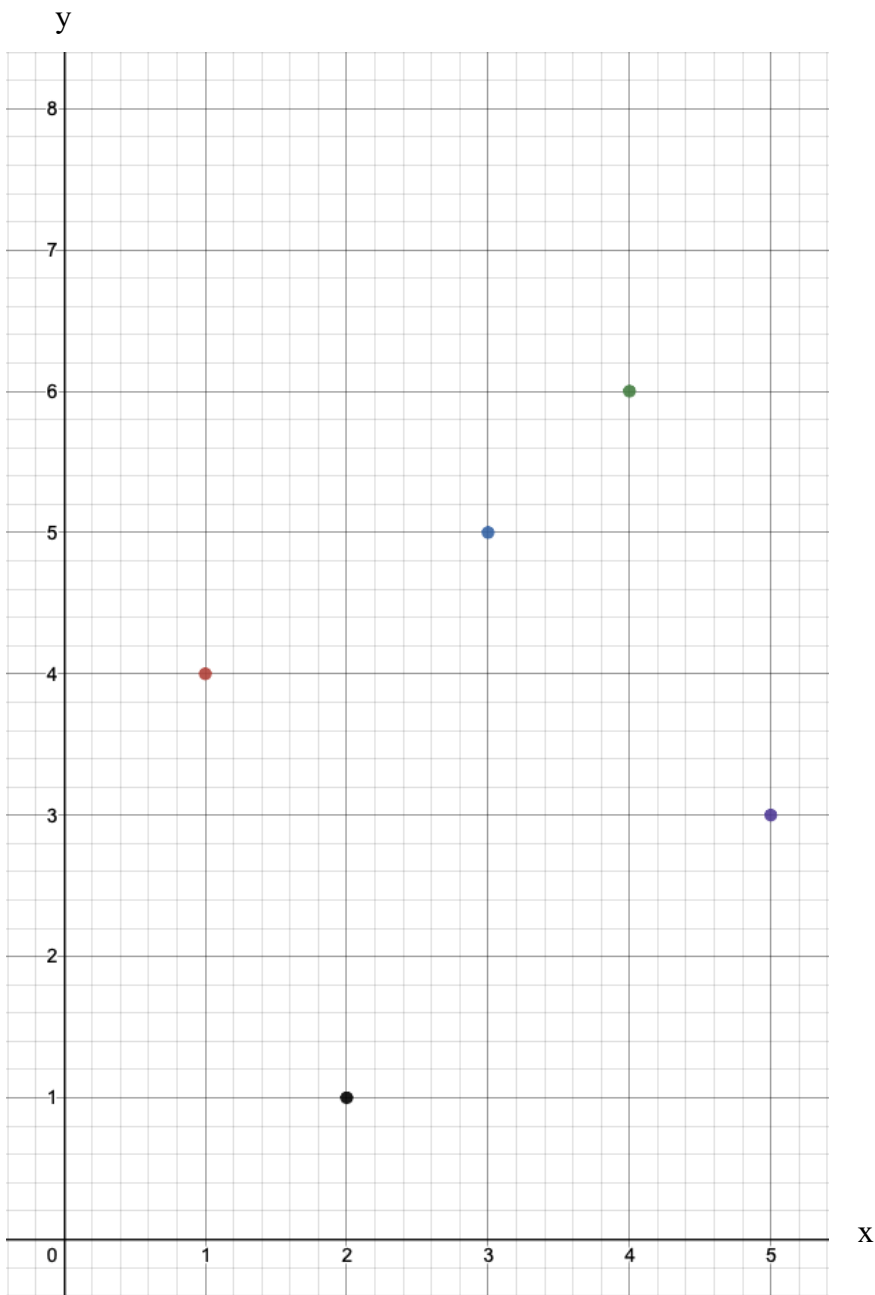
Casper's creative contributions is a mix of traditional and new. He focusses on a high quality of ingredients, not necessarily with an organic or environmental perspective, but with a recognition on what is peaking at different seasons. Casper's most famous contribution is arguably his butter aged ribeye, which has gained worldwide attention for its originality and outspoken vulgarity. Here did Casper take ingredients that are already present and used them to make an original and extreme product, which has exceed any expectations. This is closely related to no. 4 and the Advance Forward Incrementation as its recognized as a motion moving forward in an accelerated manner that exceeds the expected rate. But given that he actually has mentioned that he was inspired by the old way of preserving meat, where one meat in fat, its arguably more of a reconstruction or redirection (Vice, 2018). This is closer to no. 6, which is defined as taking the field back to where it once was, and then taking it in a different direction. Casper hasn't invented anything new that was similar to the butter aged steaked. Instead does he proclaim that he wants to be the first to make great food available at a reasonable price at his new restaurant called Cappa. This would be more of a no. 5 or Redirection, as he redirects the field from where it is towards a different direction. I therefore end up giving his creative contribution no. 5.

Moving on to Eric do we see more of radical and extreme creative contributions, for instance not wanting to serve meat and not being open in the weekends while trying to get the third Michelin

star. This is clear elements of a redirection of the field which is no. 5. It's likely that other restaurants in previous times also has committed themselves to not serving meat, therefore could the contribution also be viewed as reconstruction/redirection from no. 6. As Eric arguably takes the field back to a previous starting point by not wanting to serve meat and then uses this starting point to take the field in a new direction, which for instance could be the choice of being closed in the weekends. This decision would then only affect the creative contribution if we agree on the premise that this makes him a better chef, which I don't have data on, instead do I view this move in itself as a creative contribution, as it could be a trendsetter in the field of prominent restaurants. I therefore analyze Eric's creative contribution to be at no. 6.

McKay's creative contributions is difficult to quantify, if one chooses to look at his creative contributions in a simple manner, is he arguably 'just' a replicator that tries to make the perfect version of things like pancakes, pasta etc, which would place him at no. 1. But McKay's creative contribution is more than that, as he has an ability to go into the mindset and visions of the absolute elite of chefs and understand them, and then make tweaks to the dish that improves it significantly while keeping its authenticity. I would define this contribution as something that attempts to extend them, so it's somewhere in-between no. 1-4 in accordance to the 8 type model. McKay is not yet doing advance forward incrementation but leaves the impression that he has the potential to do so. Currently is no. 3 the forward incrementation the definition I find most suiting to his creative contributions. As his most of his creative contribution is taking a dish with a vision and tweaking it to new levels. There is though also elements in his creative contributions that reject current paradigms, like the invention of the soft shell taco made out of the algae called Kombu. For now will I analyze his creative contributions to primarily be at no. 3, but there are definitely potential for more and McKay will be an interesting chef to follow for the next years.

The results based on my analysis of the chefs creative contribution has created the following map.



This results gives an average number of 3.8, which indicates that most of the chefs creative contributions are within the types of creativity that accepts current paradigms and attempt to extend them, rather than their creative contributions reject current paradigms and attempt to replace them. This of course not representative for all chefs in Denmark as my sample size was very little, but is still an interesting point, that are relevant for keeping in mind when creating hypothesis.

## Results & discussion

When McKay was asked question no. 10 from the third set of questions “Have you done something that first was perceived as weird or crazy and then stopped doing it as it had gotten popular or mainstream to do so?” was this the interesting thing, that he himself instead of naming examples with other people. This is evidence for him to have an introverted personality, as this process seems to be going on in his own head instead of mentioning examples with other people. As earlier mentioned does their not seem to be a clear link between creativity and extraversion, but it could be interesting to test further. As I would claim that persons like Umut, Casper and Eric were very extraverted compared to McKay being more introverted. Further did my analysis show that McKay’s creative contributions fall within the of types of creativity that accepts current paradigms and attempt to extend them. This is compared to Umut, Casper and Eric’s creative contribution that reject current paradigms and attempt to replace them. With this do I have a point for creating and testing the following hypothesis: are extroverted chefs more likely have creative contributions that rejects current paradigms and attempt to replace them? Furthermore has the link between creativity and extraversion in other studies proven to be domain depended, therefore could it be interesting to test if this also was the case with prominent chefs.

The interview with Casper and Eric revealed that they in the last year have been more able to work from home while also spending more time with their family. This notion would be interesting to test in future when things are back to normal and the restaurants again are packed. As there seem to be a correlation between the chefs happiness and them working more from home. This is another example of a possible hypothesis this thesis has produced, which later could be tested in reality. Thinking about Umut’s new takeaway concept and this as a creative response to emerging challenges could it be interesting to test if creativity increases ones chance to stay in business during the corona pandemic. This could show a connection between creativity and dealing with challenges in a untraditional manner.

In regards to openness to experience do I think of McKay and his ability to do so. McKay has successfully adapted to the challenges emerging from the corona crisis. For instance has he made pasta in his home and sold it from his balcony. He also made a job change towards a more prominent restaurant. This makes me think if there are a possibility for a correlation between ones openness to experience and ones chances to be successful during an pandemic.

## Conclusion

The thesis' theoretic focus has been on creativity and creative processes. One theory that has been applied are the 8 type model, which can be used to give creative contributions a numeric value based on its type. Using this model was I able to quantify the qualitative data from the interview. By analyzing the data and making a map over the chefs creative contributions is it possible for this thesis to contribute with new knowledge within the area of empirical research, which is ideal for the inductive thesis. I also used this map to make qualified hypotheses grounded in the empirical data. Another noticeable point of this thesis, is its future possibility to move from the inductive to deductive research, by the creation of hypothesis founded in wondering from the results of the analysis.

This was one way this thesis has dealt with answering its research question on how has prominent chefs have responded to the emerging challenges caused by the Corona crisis, with an special focus on their creativity. Another way was through the analysis of the interviews where it was obtained the following: that Umut during the pandemic has created a new takeaway product that are more brilliant than previous products. Casper and Eric has both found a reconnection with their family and feels that this experience makes them a better and more complete chef. Eric seems very determined to insure this in the future, for instance by closing his restaurants in the weekends to spend time with his family. Chano has found new ways to use his creativity outside the gastronomy scene. Lastly did McKay

## Thesis relation to the world, future research and limitations.

The hypothesizes earlier mentioned in the thesis are one example of theoretical implications produced by this thesis. As they can be used to test if they truthfulness also persist in the real world. This would be a move from inductive to deductive approach when testing hypothesis created in this thesis.

No practical implications from study are mentioned, as I don't believe the study is complete enough to have such an impact. One hypothetical example could be to return to the participants after research is done and telling the about the different ways chefs have dealt with the emerging



challenges caused by the Corona crisis. But I would like to test my hypothesis about this before claiming to have found out

Future research could also be about a more comprehensive personality test on prominent chefs in order to test if certain personality traits are correlated to creativity.

I could also test if one's ability to make certain creative contributions are better at protecting one from the negative effect of the corona crisis.

Adding more quantitative data in the thesis would likely give more representative data, it is a limitation of this thesis claims based from the data, that this has not been done.

A limitation with the thesis is that in the chosen method are formulating the best questions and finding their right order is a time full process done, that are done by trial and error. One could then quickly change their questions when they didn't work correctly the first time. One then has to consider variances at participants end like mood and setting which impact results of the answers given. Semi structured interviews are a method known for being a constant process, where the next time might be better than the last, as the interviewer becomes more knowledgeable about the topic and more experienced and confident with the method. This limits the data produced in the start of using this method.

## Abstract

This thesis started with an interest on how the corona crisis has changed the way prominent chefs work. After some work with theory about creative processes and a deeper study of hermeneutic methodology, did the research changed focus towards how prominent chefs has responded to the emerging challenges caused by the Corona crisis, with an special focus on their creativity. I wanted to used the inductive approach and empirical data to find out more about this. I wanted to unfold what was under the surface. The data was collected by semi structured interviews. There have been made 5 interviews in total. All the participants are chefs but work on completely different levels. They are Umut Sakarya from Guldkroen, Chano Jørgensen, Casper Sobczyk from Cappa, Eric Vildgaard from Jordnær and McKay Wilday from Geranium. The analysis following the interviews did for instance make it possible to create a map over the chefs creative contributions. Further was I able to find relevant knowledge about how the chefs have dealt with the challenges emerging from the corona crisis. This knowledge was then used to create hypothesis that later on can be tested in

the real world for their truthfulness. This could then be used to formulate new theory on how prominent chefs has responded to the emerging challenges caused by the Corona crisis.

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## Attachments

Contact paper.

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### **Invitation to an interview about the current gastronomy scene**

I'm currently writing my thesis about how prominent chefs work during the pandemic. I'm currently a student for the master of science in Business Administration and Philosophy at CBS. I

find it interesting to learn more about the adaptation that chefs have had to do during the pandemic and how they currently work, ex. how the craft of being a chef is developing during these times? I know that a lot of chefs are under stress due to closed restaurants, but I also see a great ability to overcome these challenges by using creativity to work in different and new ways. One of my main focuses is to understand more about how the craft itself is developing during the pandemic. With questions like how do you work now in relation to topics like creativity, sustainably and economics. I therefore write to you with the intend to do an interview with you in order to get more knowledge about how you work during these times. The interview would be guided by some fixed questions that I have already prepared, but I strongly believe that there should be some open space for you to take the interview in a certain direction. I imagine that the interview would take somewhere between 30 min to one hour, maybe even more if you have the time and the need is there. I have a great respect for people working in the creative industry. And I have a keen interest in finding out more about working creatively while working under the demands of capitalism. I would prefer to meet face to face in a place that you are comfortable in, like maybe your restaurant. Where we can keep a safe distance, wear masks and so on. I do get weekly corona test because of my job and I care a great deal about not getting corona, since my father is in the high risk group. That being said do I also fully respect if you want to do the interview online for instance on Microsoft Teams. I'm Danish by the way, but my studyline is in English so I prefer to do it in English.

Best regards, Rasmus A.O.P.

Tlf. 60195002

Email [olssonlg2@gmail.com](mailto:olssonlg2@gmail.com)

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/raop93>



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Question set no. 1

1. Can you in short tell me who you are and what you normally work with?
2. Who was the first person you had your apprenticeship at?
3. What did you learn there?
4. Did you learn anything about adaptability?
5. What have you worked with during corona?
6. How has the period with corona challenged you and your normal way of doing things?
7. Have you had any challenges with expressing your creativity?
  - a. Ex. In creating new dishes
8. Have you had any challenges regarding sustainability?
9. Have you had any challenges regarding economy?
10. Are there any positive experiences from the last year?
11. Did you become a better chef during corona?
12. Is there anything that you became better at during corona?
13. Is there any knowledge you as a chef has gained during corona that could be useable in the future?
14. Is there anything that you as a chef will miss when society is open and back to normal?

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Question set no. 2

\* = changes or new questions compared with set no. 1

1. Can you in short tell me who you are and what you normally work with?
2. Who was the first person you had your apprenticeship at?
3. What did you learn there?

4. Did you learn anything about adapting under pressure?\*
  5. What have you worked with during the last year?\*
  6. How has the period with corona challenged you?
  7. Have you had any challenges with expressing your creativity?
    - a. Ex. In creating new dishes
  8. Have you had any challenges regarding sustainability?
  9. Have you had any challenges regarding economy?
  10. Are there any positive experiences from the last year?
  11. Did you in any way become a better chef during corona?\*
  12. Is there anything that you became better at during corona?
  13. Is there any knowledge you as a chef has gained during corona that could be useable in the future?
  14. Is there anything that you as a chef will miss when society is open and back to normal?
- 

### Question set no. 3

\* = changes or new questions compared with set no. 2

1. Can you in short tell me who you are and what you normally work with?
2. Who was the first person you had your apprenticeship at?
3. What did you learn there? \*(left out in this set of questions)
4. Did you learn anything about adapting under pressure?
5. What have you worked with during the last year?
6. How has the period with corona challenged you?
7. What is innovative about the way you work?\*
8. Why are you relevant as a chef?\*
9. How do you develop dishes?\*
- a. Is this a outlined process?\*

10. Have you done something that first was perceived as weird or crazy and then stopped doing it as it had gotten popular or mainstream to do so? \*
    - a. Do you have any examples?\*
  11. Do you have ideas that make great sense for you, but people in general misunderstand or don't understand at all?\*
  12. Are you open towards new ideas?\*
  13. Do you like to experiment?\*
  14. When you are doing creative work do you tend to work more in a scientific or experimental manner?\*
  15. Have you had any challenges with expressing your creativity?
    - a. Ex. In creating new dishes
  16. Have you had any challenges regarding sustainability?
  17. Have you had any challenges regarding economy?
  18. Are there any positive experiences from the last year?
  19. Did you in any way become a better chef during corona? \*(left out in this set of questions)
  20. Is there anything that you became better at during corona? \*(left out in this set of questions)
  21. Is there any knowledge you as a chef has gained during corona that could be useable in the future?
  22. Is there anything that you as a chef will miss when society is open and back to normal?
-