

# Where Dreams and Nightmares Are From: Creativity and Creative Economy

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The aim is to examine the multiple meanings of creativity in creative economy. The meanings which reinforce the individual aspect stress that personal characteristics may unlock the wealth that lies within people. The definitions that reinforce the organizational and social aspects understand creativity as a process, which requires knowledge, networks, and technologies that interconnect novel ideas and contexts. The perspectives which reinforce the political aspect see that creativity took the status of a doctrine to secure collaboration between government and industry. However, these notions of creativity stress its instrumental utility and undermine fantasy, play, or uselessness.

*Keywords:* creativity, creative economy, creative industries, individual aspect, organizational aspect, political aspect

## Introduction

The notion of creative economy usually refers to a diversified set of activities based on individual talent or abilities. It encompasses a great range of sectors, such as crafts, fashion, the audiovisual, music and book industries and the new software and games. The creative industries are related to social development policies and, differently from other traditional sectors of the economy (Jesus, 2011a; 2012a; 2012b; 2013a; 2013b; Jesus & Kamlot, 2016), connect with post-materialistic values, characterized by the attendance of people's aesthetic and intellectual needs (Jesus, 2014a; 2014b; 2017a; 2017b; Jesus & Kamlot, 2017). Although creativity may be often intangible and therefore difficult to measure, it is typically used in creative economy studies to describe the expression of the human potential for realization in activities that generate products and the ability to manipulate symbols and meanings to generate innovations. In the creativity literature, most standard definitions indicate that creativity requires that people make or think something new to the individual and perhaps to the world (novelty), as well as useful or valuable, which depends upon social context or subjective judgement. Process-based definitions of creativity introduce perspectives beyond the singular and gifted individual, but most Western commentators, from Plato to Sigmund Freud, have tended to focus on the divergent, spontaneous, impulsive, and/or irrational aspects of creativity, which are associated with the myth of the individual creative genius, dominant in managerial approaches to creativity and popular culture (Boden, 1994; De Bono, 1992). However, Weisberg (1993) argued that creativity results not from a sudden and mysterious moment, but from a careful and concerted effort and the technical expertise of the creator. The first-hand accounts sometimes

overlook the contributions of collaborators and contemporaries behind the individual creative moment. In a managerial view of creativity, a refusal to conform to organizational culture by the individual may be tolerated, but this tolerance is unlikely to extend into operational deadlines and targets, which seems to reinforce the separation between creators and managers. However, Koestler (1964) argued that the combination of opposites is a vital stage in the generation of new ideas and concepts. Bilton and Leary (2002) argued that individual creativity will thrive when individuals are parts of a larger creative system, through which different ideas can collide in unpredictable ways.

In creative industries, aesthetic and artistic conceptions influence the choices and the allocation of resources (Bendassoli, Wood Jr., Kirschbaum, & Cunha, 2009; Figueiredo, Jesus, Robaina, & Couri, 2019; Jesus, Kamlot, & Dubeux, 2020). Creation and recreation are parts of any art production or organization, but creativity and business were a more recent combination which became popular with Howkins (2001) and Florida (2002) and showed that creativity was not limited to artists. Other innovative professionals could also be creative, which is liberating for some and demanding for others (Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, & Kramer, 2004). The challenge to promote the interaction between creativity and business is harder if arts and economy are understood as areas of activity which represent opposite values, with professionals who have different identities and logics of action: While arts are associated with creativity, chaos, aesthetics, subjectivity, uniqueness, and freedom, economy is usually associated with control, order, repetition, practicality, predictability, and calculation. Artists frequently try to resist manager's attempts at control, not so much the other way around (Koivunen, 2009). With the growing relevance of creative industries, there has been a series of attempts to link the cultural sectors with innovation policy and downplay the connection between them and traditional arts or cultural policy (Oakley, 2009).

According to Horkheimer and Adorno (2002), the term "cultural industries" refers to industrially produced commercial entertainment—broadcasting, film, publishing, and recorded music—as distinct from the subsidized arts—visual and performing arts, museums, and galleries. They argue that the cultural act becomes an economic value and diminishes the features of an authentic experience (Jesus, 2009a; 2010). In this context, arts and culture seem to become less special because of their special or exceptional differences and diffuse into the need for creativity across the economy and society (Cunningham, 2006). Cultural industries may also be approached from the perspectives of production processes, strategy, distribution, and marketing efforts, which can be impacted by multiple crises (Jesus, 2020; Jesus et al., 2019; 2020). It seems that products of cultural industries can be treated almost as any product, with perhaps a little additional flavor in their artistic nature, as if goods and services with sufficient artistic content were considered creatively and culturally significant. Because of political, economic, and technological reasons, the notion of "creative economy" was disseminated worldwide, in a way that culture has been subsumed within a creative economy agenda, and its distinctive aspects have been obscured (Koivunen, 2009). The economy and politics go hand in hand when the UK government branded the cultural industries as creative industries and signaled a policy focus on sectors which produce novel cultural products based on individual creativity, skill, and talent and have a potential for wealth and job creation through intellectual property. This policy change in the context of technological transformations, such as the internet and digitalization stimulated more business opportunities and modifications in business models in the post-industrial economies, in which creativity would not be understood as elitist and exclusive, but embraced as democratic and inclusive, within everyone's reach. The "everything is creative" idea can easily endanger the whole concept of creativity itself, in a context in which cultural

industries and creative industries seem basically to refer to the same thing, and creativity seems to be for all, and thus for no one in particular (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007; Jeffcutt & Pratt, 2002). Creative industries cease to be industrial sectors producing cultural products or services, let alone the refuge of the uncommodifiable, and become markets for novelty conveying and organizing the production and dissemination of new ideas across the economy (Oakley, 2009). In the political dimension, there has been a concerted effort to shape a wide range of working practices by invoking creativity and innovation, which were supposed to make societies and economies grow in a competitive world and were accepted uncritically as an assertion of national identity and a key form of economic competition in many countries. As creativity became pivotal to the wider economy, it has also become banal (Schlesinger, 2007).

Creativity has turned into a fashionable notion in the managerial and political lexicon and seemed to have strong approval in education, business, and the arts. “Creative industries” has become an umbrella term for artistic and cultural production and distribution, and “creativity” usually indicates a capacity for innovation, flexibility, and autonomy. In education, creativity has spread beyond its original context of arts-based subjects and is used to refer to a generalized ability to solve problems and generate concepts. The lack of a precise definition of creativity is problematic when governments attempt to frame effective policy interventions in the creative economy (Bilton & Leary, 2002; Peters, 2009). The aim of the article is to examine the multiple meanings of creativity in creative economy. It is argued that the meanings which reinforce the individual aspect stress that personal characteristics, such as vision, focus, financial acumen, pride, and urgency may unlock the wealth that lies within people. The definitions that reinforce the organizational and social aspects understand creativity as a process, which requires knowledge, networks, and technologies that interconnect novel ideas and contexts. The perspectives which reinforce the political aspect see that creativity took the status of a doctrine, which has undergone refinements to secure collaboration between government and industry. However, these problem-solving notions of creativity stress its instrumental utility and undermine fantasy, play, or uselessness.

### **The Meanings of Creativity in Creative Economy: The Individual Aspect**

A person’s creativity may be considered the product of the ability to think in metaphorical terms, associate elements that have been separated from one another, seek new information, and understand inner thoughts (Kandel, 2011). The mind can explore these different paths by associating an analogical, associative, free, and digressive primary thought and a more structured and guided secondary thought. The free and hyper-associative primary thought facilitates the emergence of time for creativity by opening horizons and providing opportunities. The secondary thought is then necessary to allow this process to shape a more creative self. This general approach must be defined in terms of the domain in which creativity takes place (Geffe, 2016).

In creative economy, creativity may be understood as an individual aspect of entrepreneurs, who share five characteristics—vision, focus, financial acumen, pride, and urgency—to unlock the wealth that lies within themselves and manage this wealth to engender more wealth. The most valuable currency for these individuals is not money, but ideas, which are intangible and highly mobile. The management of creativity puts a premium on just-in-time working and involves knowing when to exploit the non-rivalrous nature of ideas, assert intellectual property rights, and make one’s ideas-as-products rivalrous. Creativity comes to the recognition of the talent within individuals and enables them to develop their cultural, business, technological, and/or scientific talent in a corporate form, which is critical not only for creative industries, but for almost any economic activity. In this sense, creativity is fuzzy, subjective, and individual. It does not necessarily result in

innovation, which is typically understood as an objective and group-based, social process that will only be allowed to continue if it is approved as a new way or methodology of doing something for the market and taking it to the consumer (Dubina, Carayannis, & Campbell, 2012; Howkins, 2001). However, Bilton and Leary (2002) argued that creativity brokering attempts to facilitate creative thinking by making connections across individual habits of thought and organizational boundaries. For the authors, the ability to broker connections among different people, experiences, talents, technologies, and emotions becomes the main role of creative managers, who should not only identify and nurture talented individuals, but reinforce aspects, such as motivation, risk management, resource allocation, and the exploitation of ideas which can be turned into revenue streams.

Personal creative capacities and dispositions may be formed in the context of normative and technical regimes of conduct, such as those provided by educational, aesthetic, legal, familial, political, and economic institutions (Du Gay, 2007). In this context, every creative producer aims at taking the lead over existing goods and producers. Competition among the producers refers less to the price of their goods, but to their respective abilities to supply new business models (Lash & Urry, 1994; Potts, 2011). When faced with the need to recognize or appropriate a new product, creative consumers do not decide to buy entirely by the price of a new product, but they try to understand its possible advantages (Greffé, 2016). The creativity-based identities—such as the creative producer and the creative consumer, imbued with a creative capacity—bring an increasing range of activities and ways of relating to oneself as having potential application and relevance for the creative economy. For example, customizing, personalizing, and remixing are aspects of creative consumption that equip individuals with productively positioned capacities. These are the practices that can set fans and students on a course to make substantial contributions as creative workers in dynamic relations with professional production institutions. Nevertheless, the construction of these identities shows the “cult of creativity” that permeates policy, business, and the educational discourse in many countries regarding creative economy (Ashton, 2011).

### **The Meanings of Creativity in Creative Economy: The Organizational and Social Aspects**

Individuals may be the primary source of creativity, but some contexts and organizational settings enable creativity to flourish. In this perspective, creativity is understood as a process, which requires knowledge, networks, and technologies that interconnect novel ideas and contexts. The process is sustained by inspiration and informed by talent, vitality, and commitment, which make creative work volatile, dynamic, and risk-taking, shaped by tacit skills that are frequently submerged within domains of endeavor. The external pressures for new products and content and the internal challenges of convergence of content and technologies shape creative organizations and industries, which are characterized by dynamic, inter-operational, interdisciplinary, hybrid, multi-layered, and rapidly changing contact-zones. The operational dynamics of convergence is intersectoral—between the media/information industries and the cultural/arts sector, for example, interprofessional—when multiple domains of creative endeavor are brought together by new opportunities for the use of digital media technologies—and transgovernmental, when creative organizations and industries bring together a complex network of stakeholders to do effective governance. The outcomes of this operational convergence span a diverse range of activities with creativity at their core and multiple economic forms, from micro-businesses to transnational organizations, from sole artists to global media corporations (Jeffcutt & Pratt, 2002).

The definitions which stress the social and organizational aspects of creativity argue that individualistic conceptions of creativity treat creativity as quasi-commodity of the creative class, composed of knowledge workers who lead the generation of wealth in cities and regions through intellect and creativity (Florida, 2002). Wilson (2010) reclaimed creativity as a social phenomenon, which often results from human interaction across boundaries of nation states, professions, industries, organizations, disciplines, social and cultural groupings. According to the author, the interaction across boundaries motivates and constrains the reproduction and transformation of social values and the realization of human beings' creative potential. To develop social creativity, it is necessary to enable interdisciplinarity, support collective critical reflection, facilitate engagement, develop communicative tolerance, and apply alternative methods. Amabile (1995) argued that systems approach to the study of creativity has considered peoples' complex interactions and feedback cycles. For example, Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) systems model works with the interrelations between the domain of knowledge, the field—which refers to the reliance on experts to pass judgement on what constitutes creativity—and creative people. However, Wilson (2010) argued that, despite the inclusion of the social perspective, Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) systems model still understands that creativity springs from the actions of the creative individual, as opposed to being the emergent co-creation which arises from the relations among domains, fields, and individuals.

Organizational creativity usually refers to fostering an atmosphere where risk-taking and experimentation are encouraged as systemic functions of the organization which engages all its areas, stimulates interdisciplinarity, encourages a better balance between generative thinking and critical thinking in all modes of understanding, overcomes departmental boundaries, and mixes different kinds of knowledge and expertise (Robinson, 2001). The perspectives that place a central emphasis on sociality typically do so in opposition to varieties of methodological individualism, which stress the explanatory role of rationally calculating individuals behind social phenomena, such as the associative dynamics of the creative industries, which are highly dependent upon lively ecologies of tacit knowledge and sensitive to the particularities of the social milieu and cultural embeddedness, for example. These perspectives stress the role of social interaction in the formation of trust and the management of risk and the construction of knowledge/learning organizations and places, as well as the role of proximity and clustering in the promotion of innovation. Nevertheless, they marginalize psychological or aesthetic aspects and tend to privilege the idea of the professional community as a consensus-seeking community. Some constructivist authors argue that the social dynamics of creativity is mediated by processes of cognition, which are mediated by the operative cultural models of the context (Jesus, 2009b; Taylor, 2011).

In creative organizations, creativity may refer to the organization structure, work processes, culture, and traditions, which usually require more discipline than chaotic thinking. It may consist of hard work and lifelong education and practice, with people involved in daily routines. The word may also refer to accounts of creative processes, which emphasize the organizing of these processes, collective creativity—an alternative to the myth of individual genius, contextualized creativity, and relationality. Creativity also refers to emotions and sensuous perceptions and the body, particularly the moment of creation and the emotions and feelings that arise at that moment, which may involve intimacy and solitude. It may also deal with the development of an artistic craft, with great passion involved and a lifetime education and practice to master these skills. Creativity may be used to describe aesthetic capabilities in work, such as aesthetic judgement, sense of rhythm, strive for beauty, improvisation, an ability to notice and become aware of intangible things and verbalize ideas beyond rationality.

Creativity may also deal with performance and the aesthetics of capitulation—which requires great courage, self-esteem, and experience, with the use of personal qualifications to engage others and inspire and support them, including the audience and other organizations (Koivunen, 2009).

Creative economy includes the use of project-based businesses, organizational architecture enacted through networks, identity conflicts in labor markets, and the role of third parties—such as critics, mediators, and consumers—in sparking and identifying new products and services. The hard architecture of projects and organizations—which seems more geared towards making money out of the ideas—is intertwined with the soft architecture of communities and networks, the locus for the generation and open exchange of ideas, collective problem-solving and critical debate. The main challenges involve managing creative personnel, practices, and processes. The management of creative personnel poses challenges because of the tensions based on the dual goals of commerce and art, typically associated with exploitation for efficiency and profitability contrasted with exploration, in which returns are both uncertain and not limited to economic ends. The management of practices and processes may create space for informal interactions among team members and the emergence of ideas. However, they can also impose strict deadlines to not only integrate these diverse efforts but to do so efficiently, allowing for the expansion of creative efforts. Conflicts may arise because of the difference paradox of crafting or standardizing policies, the distance paradox of whether to couple or decouple routine work, the globalization paradox of whether to reconcile or separate local and global arenas of activity, and the identity paradox of generating individual or collective identities, reputations, and careers (DeFillippi, Grabher, & Jones, 2007).

### **The Meanings of Creativity in Creative Economy: The Political Aspect**

Regarding policy thinking, creativity took the status of a doctrine, which has undergone refinements to secure collaboration between government and industry and produce a context for sustainable growth in the creative industries. These industries were defined in the UK in the late 1990s as activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent and have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property, such as advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software, and television and radio. The pursuit of a “creativity policy” became a project for a competitive nation for which education, training, and government intervention in the market to establish favorable conditions to company performance were preconditions for a knowledge economy. Creativity has become a generalized value worldwide because it could bring endogenous growth through institutional structures supporting innovation and trained human capital. Creativity was defined by many policy-makers as the generation of ideas, such as new ways of looking at problems and seeing opportunities, perhaps by exploiting emerging technologies or changes in markets. Innovation meant the successful exploitation of these ideas in new products, services, and ways of running and doing business (Jesus & Dubeux, 2018; Schlesinger, 2007). The economic value of creative economy may look small, but its contribution to the coordination of ideas, technologies, and processes of change is substantial (Greffé, 2016). Critics say that culture as innovation goes further than creative industries discourse, not only in stating cultural value in terms of economic impact, but in breaking up cultural activities into the novel and innovative and the heritage and educational activities (Cunningham, 2006; Jesus, 2017c; Jowell, 2004; Oakley, 2009).

In the political dimension, creative industries have taken their place at the high table alongside the financial and business services sector in many countries (Bakhshi, 2009), and many policymakers agree that

economic development and job growth stimulated by creative economy can be the solution to urban poverty. However, in many cities around the world, an active participation in the local economy, social institutions, and broader civil society are denied to their residents, and most urban neighborhoods bear the persistent physical and social manifestations of economic inequality, gentrification, and social exclusion, intensified by transformations based on creative economy. In some places, the labor market has expanded the number of job categories in which the most skilled members reap a disproportionate share of rewards like in sports (Jesus, 2011b; 2014c) and accelerate economic inequality and political and social polarization, particularly in leading creative areas. For the creative economy to become a creative society, creative economy must integrate economic opportunity and social inclusion and combine market principles with social purposes (Florida, 2017; Stern & Seifert, 2008). However, the seductiveness of creativity strategies in the political dimension should be understood in terms of their basic complementarity with prevailing neoliberal development fixes, compatibility with discretionary, selective, and symbolic supply-side policy-making, and conformity with development interests. Creativity strategies presume, work with, and subtly remake the neoliberal terrain of urban politics and place commodified assets like the arts and street culture into the sphere of interurban competition, enabling the formation of new local political channels and constituencies and constituting new objects and subjects of urban governance. Creativity strategies celebrate mobile creative subjects, making the case for public investment in their preferred urban milieu, while shifting the primary focus of proactive governance towards the needs of a techno-bohemian middle-class. Taking the flexible and unequal economy as given, these strategies consolidate disciplinary modes of govern mentality based on mandatory individualism, relentless innovation, and continuous productivity (Peck, 2009).

### Conclusion

Organization, management, and governance are fundamental to understanding the concept of creativity in creative economy. To have a more precise perspective, it is necessary, at the microlevel, to analyze the process and craft of creative activity in different sectors and identify the catalysts for creative invention and its successful translation into the processes that lead to innovative outputs. At the intermediate level, the comparison, across domains, of what enables and supports innovation in the interface with creative invention concentrates on key intermediary factors for creative enterprises, such as organization, networking, expertise, and media. At the macrolevel, the comparative analysis within and across cities, regions, and nations of the relationship between creative enterprises and socio-economic development may concentrate on the role of key environmental enablers/inhibitors, such as intellectual property rights, cultural diversity, skill sets and access, entrepreneurship capabilities, information and technology (ICT) capabilities, governance, institutional partnerships, labor markets, development policy, and funding. At the metalevel, the longer-term impact of changes in aesthetics, lifestyle, commodification, and spatiality on the development of an evolving network society can be considered (Jeffcutt & Pratt, 2002). However, it is important to say that these concepts of creativity do not undermine or challenge social norms, but they are understood as fundamental to social cohesion. The creative dynamics may bring lots of new products in the marketplace, but they do not necessarily challenge the operation of markets themselves. Creativity in creative economy may cover economic growth and social good and suggest that there has never been any conflict between them. The problem-solving ideas of creativity stress its instrumental utility and undermine fantasy, play or uselessness, which have a long history in discussions of artistic creativity (Oakley, 2009).

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