


CREATIVE ECONOMY: INTERTWINING KNOWLEDGE, ART AND FASHION

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Emilli Karina Cominato Soares¹, Marcio Roberto Ghizzo², Marcelo Capre Dias³ and Rosimeire Naomi Nagamatsu⁴

ABSTRACT

The text explores the relationship between Creative Economy, art and fashion as potential catalysts for economic, social and cultural development. The Creative Economy, which emerged in Australia and spread in Brazil, values "know-how", uniting creativity, culture and sustainability. In Brazil, this economy represents 2.84% of GDP, with annual growth of 6.13%, and has great potential to expand creative exports. Handicrafts and fashion design, core subsectors of the Creative Economy, stand out for adding cultural and social values to products, promoting inclusion and sustainability. Authorial fashion and handicrafts rescue traditional techniques, integrating cultural identity and technological innovation. The Creative Economy faces the challenges imposed by globalization, offering market alternatives that prioritize intangible values, such as creativity and cultural heritage. It is concluded that the strengthening of the interaction between art and fashion, with the support of the government, can generate employment and income, consolidating the Creative Economy as a model of resistance and inclusion in a market dominated by consumerism

Keywords: Creative Economy, Solidarity Economy, Fashion Design.

¹ Student of the Higher Education Course in Technology in Fashion Design – Federal Technological University of Paraná

E-mail: emilli@alunos.utfpr.edu.br

² Dr. in Geography, Professor of the Higher Course of Technology in Fashion Design – Federal Technological University of Paraná

E-mail: marcioghizzo@utfpr.edu.br

³ Dr. in Business Administration, Professor of the Higher Technology Course in Fashion Design – Federal Technological University of Paraná

E-mail: capre@utfpr.edu.br

⁴ Dr. in Textile Engineering, Professor of the Higher Technology Course in Fashion Design – Federal Technological University of Paraná

E-mail: naomi@utfpr.edu.br

INTRODUCTION

Since the Industrial Revolution and the emergence of the capitalist mode of production, the productive processes have come to evidence of machinism. This fact was mainly due to the need, typical of the capital cycle, to produce more and more and with notorious quality, different from what happened in the previous time, when manual production and quality were limited, common to handicraft work.

Throughout the development of this system of production, societies began to link their levels of development with the productive sphere associated with social data. In addition, with the advent of globalization, the world has become submissive to the production model of transnational corporations. As a result, nations have devoted salutary attention so that the industrial economies of their countries improve more and more, seeking to raise their level of development and, at the same time, ensuring conditions of vitality of their companies in the face of global competition. However, this process sometimes fails to value other types of economies, especially those linked to "know-how", overvaluing the economy submissive to the capitalist aegis and, sometimes, ignoring or failing to prioritize other values.

In this sense, countries have paid special attention to economic sectors that link "know-how" with the capitalist economy. Thus, Australia was the first country where the concept of "Creative Economy" emerged, linking social, cultural and artistic factors to the market economy. In addition to the Creative Economy, other economic models have also emerged as ways to increase the development of societies, especially local ones.

In the Brazilian case, since the beginning of the last decade, the government has started to encourage this type of Economy, and between 2019 and 2022 it suffered a relative "inattention" and, now, since 2023, it is expected to reactivate the incentives through public policies of a government more concerned with social inclusion. After all, a country like Brazil, characterized by social and cultural diversity, needs to find in the diversity of its knowledge, potentialities to develop niches in the national economy and face social inequality.

It is common for capitalist societies to value current aspects of the consumer society, prioritizing brands and fads in their consumer products. However, it is necessary to have resilience in order to seek an appreciation of subjectivity in goods through cultural, artistic and sustainable meanings that are present in the know-how of communities.

In this way, the present work intends to address, even if briefly, the Creative Economy (CE) as a means of production that values know-how, more specifically art as a raw material that adds economic, social and cultural value in products in the clothing segment.

Unfortunately, sociocultural diversity has been losing space of significance for postmodern society, marked by the consumption of products that explore appearance and look and not its social and cultural values. In addition, in Brazil there is little identification with the valorization of products created by the bias of social, cultural and sustainable responsibility, privileging consumerism and futility. It is in this sense that the Creative Economy is beyond consumerism.

The technical-methodological procedures chosen to carry out this work was the descriptive bibliographic research. Thus, there was a bibliographic review aimed at understanding the Creative Economy and its subdivision into sectors, in which fashion *design* and handicrafts are found. Thus, the methodology used was exploratory (Gil, 2019). It is, therefore, a theoretical cabinet research, in which a certain theme began to be studied as a possibility of use in the development of raw material for products in the clothing segment.

The results, although theoretical, demonstrated that handicrafts, while belonging to the group of arts and culture, are an important source of inspiration and cultural product for the development of clothing products, meaning a form of resilience that favors know-how, adding cultural and social value to fashion products. After all, fashion and handicrafts are two sub-subjects of the Creative Economy that can be altruistic.

CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT CREATIVE ECONOMY

The relevance of knowing aspects of the Creative Economy is legitimized considering the peculiarities of Brazil, mainly related to ethnic, social and cultural diversity.

These creative subsectors of Brazil are of great economic dynamism, so that in 2010 their participation in the GDP – Gross Domestic Product – was 2.84% with a growth of 6.13% per year. There are also prospects for Brazil to expand its exports of creative goods and services, which in 2010 represented only 0.30% and 3.42%, respectively, of the global value exported (Kubo, 2015).

In general, the Creative Economy is a form of development that relates the market and culture, specifically popular culture based on know-how. As the focus of this work, the

popular culture emphasized are the arts, figured in the artisanate which, together with fashion, can mean an opportunity for the development of products and society itself through urban cultural life and social interaction between different classes, inserting minorities and excluded in the market economy in a promotion of income and employment.

At this juncture, the production of clothing and more specifically fashion is one of the areas that the Creative Economy contemplates by inserting the know-how of art and crafts, here understood as cultural knowledge and skills, in the production of clothing. There is no defined and finished concept about Creative Economy, as it is an evolving concept. However, there is consonance in recognizing that this Economy encompasses the relationship between creativity, symbolism and economy (Oliveira, Araújo & Silva, 2013, p. 07).

The Creative Economy emerged in the second half of the last century, concomitant with the emergence of the consumer society. While global capitalism made use of the mass media to encourage consumerism, another economic bias fostered attempts to confront it through alternative production models, such as the Solidarity Economy and the Creative Economy. This, permeated by the cultural, social and economic wealth linked to the productive environment, adds values through know-how and subjective skills, in a tone that emphasizes social, economic and environmental sustainability, in addition to stimulating innovation and cultural diversity.

With its genesis in Australia, when authorities linked to the cultural sector of that country proposed, in 1994, the *Australia: Creative Nation*. Then, in 1997, they published the UK's *Creative Economy report*, by the British Culture Office with the aim of analyzing the national accounts of the United Kingdom, identifying market trends and the country's comparative advantages. This initiative represented "a practically unique exercise in government – transversal to the traditional Whitehall divisions⁵, uniting government and industry in a partnership and defining an agenda with specific themes" (Reis, 2008, p. 16).

Initially designated as Creative Industries, there was a systematization of the use of the terms in order to avoid confusion of interpretation. Although there is no systematization about this, this model of Economics can be understood as the...

designation of activities that have creativity as their center of value generation, is part of the knowledge economy and has the same main distinguishing characteristics: the intangible nature of most products, the large participation of the productive factor knowledge in the

processes, rapid diffusion of innovations, greater flexibility both in process changes and in the reconfiguration of products (Serra & Fernandez, 2014, p. 362)

In Brazil, the Creative Economy gained notoriety from 1994 onwards, although this type of economy had been treated for a longer time. Thus, from the end of the last century, the Creative Economy has become more expressive, especially in the discussions of sustainability that, year after year, have become more evident. It was thus that, in 2012, when the country was governed by a management of relative commitment to social causes and the development of alternative economies, the Ministry of Culture embraced the project Creative Economy Plan: Policies, Guidelines and Actions. Such a plan had – and has, the objective of signaling solid paths for the Creative Economy, defining its concept and explaining its structure organized in sectors. According to this plan,

the Federal Government (assumes) the challenge of building a new development alternative, based on cultural diversity, social inclusion, innovation and sustainability. To this end, it elects the creative economy as an axis of development of the Brazilian State (Ministério da Cultura, 2012, p. 44)

In the same document, the Creative Economy sectors were defined as healthy and understood as healthy

Those whose productive activities have as their main process a creative act that generates a product, good or service, whose symbolic dimension is determinant of its value, resulting in the production of cultural, economic and social wealth (Ministry of Culture, 2012, p. 22)

For Kubo (2015), the plan defined, in the Brazilian case, the concept of Creative Economy in a synthetic way, emphasizing that this economy is not generated from perishable raw materials, but from intangible values, such as creativity, culture and knowledge.

The Plan of the Ministry of Culture was extremely important for the Brazilian Creative Economy, as it meant an instrument of guarantee, incentive, promotion and guidelines for the portion of society that already developed its activities based on the essence of this economy. After all, the Plan showed that knowledge, know-how, creativity and innovation are elements of great relevance in the social and economic development of the country and its regions and regionalities. As a result, the culture of the places in a society came to be seen as a possibility for local, regional and national development, contributing to the

generation of wealth, employment and income.

Acting mostly informally, the Creative Economy, based on know-how, creativity and the culture of places and people, in its most varied sectors, develops as a promising segment of the market economy, combining culture and economy in the generation of added value in productions. Thus, the Creative Economy can, in addition to generating employment, income and development, mitigate social vulnerability and instigate upward social mobility.

According to data from IBGE and FIRJAN, the creative sectors in Brazil are of great economic dynamism, whose GDP is 2.84% of the country's total, and which has an annual growth of 6.13%. According to UNCTAD, in 2010, there is also great potential for Brazil to expand its exports of creative goods and services, which represent only 0.30% and 3.42%, respectively, of the global value exported by the rest of the world, considering these low percentages and the country's explicit potential when compared to other countries (Kubo, 2015, p.19).

In addition to this importance, the author mentions that the Creative Economy contributes greatly to the generation of employment and was responsible for a 90% increase in the number of formal jobs between 2004 and 2013. In addition, it must be considered that the Creative Economy also contributes to the generation of indirect jobs, especially in activities common to other activities in the creative sectors. It is also important to mention that formal employees of the Creative Economy have salaries 44% higher than the average of formal workers in the country.

ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

UNESCO has proposed a framework that embraces core creative sectors, related creative sectors and the intangible heritage sector. The former are understood as essentially creative sectors in which the cultural and sign value that is added to the product, and is the determinant of its exchange value. The second are sectors that are not essentially creative, but that have a considerable link with the first sector and that end up working as a driving force. Finally, the third refers to traditional sectors of communities and/or societies that have a generational tradition such as prayers, rites, languages and social practices.

It can be seen, therefore, that the Creative Economy is a form of economy that is inserted in the market economy but in an innovative way and in a way that confronts those that the capitalist system institutes in order to undermine the workers. It is a model that,

despite commonly having limited financial resources, emphasizes human and intellectual capital, highlighting attention to the cultural sense and know-how of communities, in a way that walks very close to sustainability, including as a potential economy of resistance of minorities in the face of social and economic exclusion caused by globalization.

Thus, it is reiterated that the Creative Economy has links with cultural issues of the communities, praising knowledge in order to develop possibilities of adding values to goods and transforming them into market products, collaborating for environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

With the Creative Economy Plan: Policies, Guidelines and Actions (2012), the Brazilian government, at that time, described the four Guiding Principles of the Creative Economy that would serve as the basis for direction, namely, cultural diversity, sustainability, innovation and social inclusion.

Regarding cultural diversity, it is important to consider that it refers to the different cultures that exist or may exist in a given society. In the case of Brazil, the diversity and ethnic condition of the country favors this principle. After all, creativity and national cultural variability mark this social characteristic. It is also important to emphasize that "cultural homogeneity begins to oppress diversity, making endogenous development impossible", which is why cultural diversity is extremely important, especially for a developing country such as Brazil (Ministério da Cultura, 2011, p. 34).

For UNESCO, as determined in the 2005 convention, the cultural diversity of a country or region generates a wealth that maximizes possibilities, capacities and social values. Thus, it can be postulated that the ethnic and cultural diversity of the country can, through the Creative Economy, become a determining element in economic and social development.

However, as Kubo (2015) states, it must be considered that, normally, cultural diversity is accompanied by social exclusion, minorities and forgotten values, often undermined by ideals and values of hegemonic groups. Therefore, developing and encouraging an economy that nourishes society with hope, social justice, humanism and citizenship is increasingly important.

With regard to sustainability, it is important to mention that it incorporates at least three biases, namely, economic, environmental and social sustainability (Philippe & Pelicione, 2014). Thus, in addition to worrying about environmental issues, those that concern the quality of life of society and organizations must also be considered.

An element or process, to be sustainable, must have autonomy to remain vital for a relative amount of time, obeying these three nuances. Therefore, it is understood that sustainability refers to a symbiosis in the interaction of the individual, the production processes and the world. In other words, the productive system must spend a condition of attention to environmental, economic and social causes in a model of interaction and mutuality.

Within the scope of the Creative Economy, in addition to these mentioned biases, sustainability is structured in two other interrelated biases: the geographical and the cultural.

Regarding environmental (or ecological) sustainability, it can be said that it is the use of natural resources (energy and raw materials) in such a way as not to cause damage to the environment. According to Agenda 21 (*apud* Philippe & Percione, 2014), it is linked to sustainable consumption and production patterns with efficiency in the use of energy and raw materials to reduce environmental damage. In the same way as environmental sustainability, social sustainability concerns the quality of life of society, with decent wages and income and conditions of upward social mobility. In the economic field, it is understood the appropriate use of these resources in order to offer healthy conditions for the economy of organizations, while geographic sustainability concerns the balance of the uses of urban and rural spaces and population distribution, and cultural sustainability, directly linked to the Creative Economy, has the challenge of preserving regional culture, even when it is inserted with the globalized world.

Regarding Innovation as a guiding principle of the Creative Economy, it can be understood as the application of creativity through ideas or methodologies that bring novelties compared to the previous model. Therefore, innovation breaks paradigms and usually incorporates technologies into the production system, adding cultural and economic values to goods and/or products. According to the Solidarity Economy Plan of the Ministries of Culture of Brazil, innovation "requires knowledge, the identification and recognition of opportunities, the choice of better options, the ability to undertake and take risks, a critical eye and strategic thinking that allow the achievement of objectives and purposes (Ministry of Culture, 2012). In general, Innovation is subdivided into product innovation, process innovation, organizational innovation, and marketing innovation. Approaching the theme of this work, innovation is closely related to the Creative Economy and, in a peculiar way, to Fashion, especially with regard to the product and innovation of marketing. After all, it is

understood that the insertion of cultural elements in goods ratifies these forms of innovation.

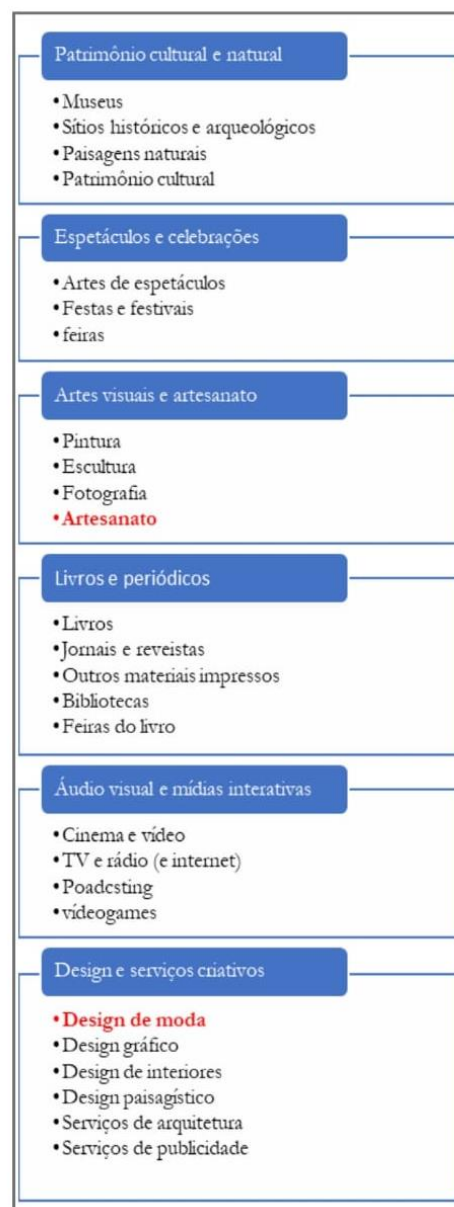
Finally, social inclusion, the fourth guiding principle of the Creative Economy, seeks precisely to insert minorities and excluded people in the productive segment of the national economy. In other words, communities, especially regional ones, that face and suffer the consequences of the globalized economy, can, through this economic model, insert themselves in the productive sphere, generating employment and income through the know-how they have. Typical of the productive system, divergence and consequent social exclusion can find, in the Creative Economy, a form of resistance and confrontation.

CREATIVE DESIGN AND SERVICES AS CORE SUBSECTORS OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

As previously expressed, the Creative Economy has, in addition to the noteworthy principles, a subdivision into creative sectors (Core Creative Sectors, Related Creative Sectors and the Intangible Heritage Sector). In these sectors, several areas were inserted because they are understood as promoters of economic development and that have a link with creativity and culture.

The core creative sectors were further subdivided into six subsectors and their activities. Regarding the theme of this work, handicrafts (visual arts and crafts sector), and fashion design (creative design and services sector) deserve to be highlighted. Figure 1 presents the creative subsectors and locates crafts and fashion design.

Figure 1. Core creative subsectors of the Creative Economy and associated activities, with emphasis on handicrafts and fashion design. Source: Ministry of Culture, 2012. Org: The authors.



It is understood that it is in these sectors that, according to the Plan of the Secretariat of the Creative Economy, the cultures of peoples and communities are expressed. In addition, it is perceived that the creative sectors are related to the know-how present in the daily life of society. In order to continue this work, the next and last item will address the relationship of handicraft and fashion design with the Creative Economy which, in the understanding of this work, occurs in a healthy way, legitimizing these fields of knowledge as an integral part of this form of economy.

CRAFTS AND FASHION DESIGN: CORE SUBSECTORS OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

As Lipovetsky states, we are at a time when fashion is increasingly celebrated on an equal footing with art. In parallel, we have as etymological definition handicraft as being the artisan's work method that combines utilitarianism with art. It is in this context that authorial fashion grows, from the combination of experiments and creativity, associated with techniques that rescue the culture and identity of a Brazil so vast and rich in diversity.

Here, art is raw material in fashion production as part of the classifications of the Creative Economy. Neri (2018) clarifies that, with regard to the definitions presented by the Ministry of Culture, fashion currently figures as one of the creative sectors that make up functional cultural creations – along with design and architecture.

As the name suggests, the Creative Economy is a development model based on creativity. It is a new model driven by intellectual capital that generates economic value. Creativity is not something new, nor is economics, but the novelty lies in the nature and extent of the relationship between them and how they combine to create extraordinary value and wealth (Howkins, 2020).

The livelihood of countless families and communities around the country, Brazilian handicrafts are one of the most diverse in the world. Estrada (2004) points out that, with the insertion of handicrafts, Brazilian fashion takes shape in the search for an identity and its commercialization gains space in the international market, a factor that contributes to the country having the fashion industry as the most valuable part of its growing Creative Economy. According to ABIT (2019), Brazil is the largest complete Textile Chain in the West and, in 2019, it was responsible for the production of 8.9 billion textile pieces and 1.2 million tons of textile production.

As Copolla & Santana (2021) point out, fashion has rescued the cultural identity of handicrafts. Crochet stitches, thread, knitting and the wide range of lace, the dialogue between past, present and future, and tradition combined with technology result in products with strong commercial appeal, and generate identification through sociological and ecological biases. In this sense, production is based on the principle that:

The foundation of the creative economy is the use of intellectual and copyright property as a way to prevent the "commoditization" of goods and services, in addition to enabling the creation of production chains from small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, which causes a positive effect both in the generation of jobs and in the distribution of income. To this end, it is up to the State and the private sector to create an

environment (ecosystem) favorable to the development of new products, techniques, technologies, and industrial and commercial processes that, in addition to generating new patents, have a uniqueness that cannot be plagiarized (Lelis & Brasil, 2018, p.50).

In fashion, the prevention of the trivialization of the product is based on the valorization of the human factor, of manual labor. From this perspective, handicrafts were viewed for a long period of history with disdain by industry and consumers. Categorized as a by-product, especially when it carried the cultural heritage of a specific region. Thus, we will understand fashion, clothing and dressing as:

A means that enables the formation of the individual's social identity. To dress is to express oneself, it is a particular form of manifestation that can identify: the probable time, the social group and even the individual's profession. Clothing, therefore, contributes to the construction of people's profiles, and may even reflect their state of mind (Kratz, 2016, p.170).

The subversion of this idea of the Creative Economy and the interaction between fashion and handicrafts results in the overvaluation of the *handmade product*, in which regional factors act as means of differentiation (exclusivity). For example, the case of Martha Medeiros who with her brand rescues the luxury of handmade weaves and embroidery. By the hands of the designer, handmade fashion gained status. His work contributes to the tourist expansion and cultural identity of handicrafts" (Copolla & Santana, 2020, p.49).

Ronaldo Fraga is another Brazilian designer known worldwide, who values the use of handicraft techniques in his products. In his collection "The Apprentice Tourist" (2013), he partnered with a cooperative of embroiderers from Passira (a small town in the agreste region of Pernambuco) translating this initiative into a gesture of inclusion and social dignity (Cidreira, p.103).

In this context, it can be stated that fashion and handicrafts, as core subsectors of the Creative Economy, represent possibilities for adding value to products and for the resilience of local and regional populations that, through know-how, demarcate their respective identities from the market economy.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present work sought to bring information from art and fashion as a possibility for the development of Creative Economy. After all, it is understood that these subsectors have an appreciation of cultural and social order through know-how.

It is understood that the globalized economy commonly undermines small entrepreneurs, so that big capital, mainly through brands, ends up holding the hegemony of this process.

There is an interesting and important niche for the economy, especially the national one, which can link art and fashion as a way of adding exchange value to the goods produced. These two areas of knowledge have similarities that are expressed in creativity and innovation and can work together in the production process.

However, there is a need for this imbrication to be further explored in order to promote income and work for the groups that may be involved in this production. It is expected that the public authorities will pay attention and promote this productive sector. After all, it is from the interaction of sectors of society that the Creative Economy, and especially the link between art and fashion, can respond with dynamism and increment and respective insertion in the market economy.

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