Alternative Analytical Approaches to Creative Economy

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to propose alternative and critical analytical perspectives to study creative economy and its correlated issues, such as creative city and creative class. A neo-marxist perspective indicates that creative economy reinforced the gap among innovators, investors, and those who work for them. According to a post-structural perspective, the formulas for the development of creative economy or creative city are homogenizing and contribute to the marginalization of differences. A postcolonial perspective indicates that marginalized societies in the capitalist system were conceived as blank spaces in which socioeconomic governance recommendations applied for creative sectors in North Atlantic societies could be replicated. Feminist approaches and queer theory highlight hierarchies related to gender, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity in creative industries, despite the supposedly inclusive notions of creative economy and creative class.

Keywords: creative economy, neo-marxism, post-structuralism, postcolonialism, feminist perspectives, queer theory

1. Introduction

Mainstream studies indicate that creative economy – which encompasses sectors ranging from crafts to software and games – has become a generator of work, wealth, and intellectual property (Bendassolli et al., 2009; Hartley, 2005). According to mainstream experts such as Florida (2002, 2005) and Landry (2008), the existence of a creative class is connected to the formation of creative territories, in particular creative cities, in which creativity, public engagement, and innovations to solve urban problems are developed (Florida 2002, 2005; Landry 2008). By addressing local specificities with the aim of enabling the cultural potential, creativity operates to differentiate not only companies, but places in the global competition for investment. It reinforces competences for differentiation compared to traditional urban and regional development policies. In the case of creative cities, social and artistic activities, creative industries, and government are articulated to generate a cultural effervescence that brings talent and encourages social diversity (Trip, 2009).

The aim is to propose alternative and critical analytical perspectives to study creative economy and its correlated issues, such as creative city and creative class. A neo-marxist perspective indicates that creative economy reinforced the gap among innovators, investors, and those who work for them. According to a post-structural perspective, the formulas for the development of creative economy or creative city are homogenizing and contribute to the marginalization of differences. A postcolonial perspective indicates that marginalized societies in the capitalist system were conceived as blank spaces in which socioeconomic governance recommendations applied for creative sectors in North Atlantic societies could be replicated. Feminist approaches and queer theory highlight hierarchies related to gender, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity in creative industries, despite the supposedly inclusive notions of creative economy and creative class.

2. Method

A qualitative approach of categorial content analysis was used to strengthen the knowledge about the main analytical axes of creative economy, as well as creative city and creative class. This type of analysis of highly cited texts published by mainstream authors in creative economy can be a way to examine trends in the area – with a focus on issues related to creative economy, creative city, and creative class – and bring the opportunity to reflect on the most influential perspectives and evident research gaps. According to Arden at al. (2018), the categorial content analysis can be an instrument to bring a better understanding of the present contexts and the development of the area of knowledge by mainstream authors, which paves the way for criticism in future studies. Researchers can get a deeper

look at published articles and books in a specific period on the field and the chosen topics.

Following the steps indicated by Arden et al. (2018), I first elected the search procedures based on the guidance of the knowledge on the scholarly literature and chose the main books and articles with high circulation rates and their use in previous analysis with the primary sources for academic publication on creative economy, creative city, and creative class from 1990 to 2021. Regarding the search and database construction, the criteria used to search these mainstream texts included the authors' names, the journals' names, and the citation count of the works in Google Scholar. The search results were cross-checked to guarantee that all the cited books and articles that met criteria were considered and some productions that were identified inappropriately by search tools were not considered, as well as duplicates.

I considered two main categories to allocate the selected information: 1) the main argument of each author, and 2) the contractions, omissions, and limitations of his/her analysis to elicit meaning and gain understanding of the main disseminated ideas on these issues and their most expressive restrictions. The purpose was to identify the limitations of these authors' arguments and the need to develop other analytical perspectives that would overcome the contradictions and limitations of these traditional analyses.

The alternative analytical approaches brought here were also constructed through bibliographical research and a qualitative approach of categorial content analysis. The search procedures, the search and data construction, and the database organization based on cross-checking were also used in their construction, but the main categories to allocate the selected information were quite different: 1) the ways through which each author exposed the contractions, omissions, and limitations of mainstream productions; 2) the arguments each author presented to overcome these obstacles for a more precise understanding of the multiple realities of creative economy, creative city, and creative class that did not fit the standards established by mainstream authors. The main concepts developed by authors in each approach were applied to the conditions of creative economy, cities, and class not only in the United States, Europe, or Australia, but also considered the reality of Latin American, Asian, and African countries and territories to have a more precise look at excluded realities from the mainstream analyses. After obtaining the relevant data concerning the topics of interest, I explored the common aspects among them to build a coherent perspective for future researchers to use these analytical perspectives to deal with multiple expressions of creative economy and not fall into some traps brought by the mainstream literature.

3. Results

For many mainstream authors (Landry, 2008; Reis, 2007), a creative economy-based development strategy recognizes the importance of human capital in fostering the integration of sociocultural and economic goals and generates opportunities based on creative entrepreneurship. Moreover, the strategy enables the formalization of enterprises, brings income and employment, and stimulates cultural expression and citizen participation in political life. However, Figueiredo et al. (2019) and Jesus et al. (2019) argue that the concentration of creative industries in specific regions, countries, or cities may exacerbate contrasts because of difficulties regarding financing creative ventures, inadequate regulatory frameworks, and gaps related to skills and knowledge.

At the local level, specialists such as Landry (2008) seemed to ignore the fact that changes in capitalism did not occur, and elements of industrial and traditional societies may coexist with creative economy in a complementary way, not necessarily a disruptive one. Some authors conceived that societies are "flat tables" in which pre-established patterns of governance of North Atlantic regions for creative economy could be replicated ignoring local particularities (Mann, 2012). Santos (1996) sees the need to historicize and humanize social processes in the Global South, and Vlassis & Beukelaer (2019) argue that pre-given formulas composed reports from international organizations on the implementation of the creative economy in many countries and brought many failures in this process.

Mainstream authors such as Venturelli (2000) pointed out that the stimulation of innovation and originality for creative industries should be given by different public policies levels. However, when these recommendations apply to peripheral states or local particularities are considered, the inadequacy or unfeasibility of such proposals become evident. In some regions of the world, political issues create obstacles to the implementation of public policies which would aim to stimulate creative economy and industries, such as the interruption of such policies, the precarious technical staff, and the aggravation of corruption (Bezerra, 2012). References to the potential for income and employment generation related to the creative economy may be connected to electoral purposes or the creation of forged feelings of national cohesion, aimed at people's manipulation (Jesus et al., 2019).

In some areas, ethnic issues, religion, and wars may compromise the potential of creative activities in promoting

peace, stabilizing societies, and bringing economic growth. These obstacles have been overlooked by many mainstream authors and the political discourses that preach the replication of "social transformation formulas". The appreciation of local cultures in some countries and cities was intermittent, unequal, and opportunistic among creative sectors, which emptied their critical content, generated the illusion that greater representativeness would always include more respect for diversity, and strengthened stereotypes and prejudice against differences.

When urban projects for creative cities are considered, some mainstream theorists argue that the design and policies for these places must be built organically on their existing potential. Such cities owe a hard infrastructure of buildings and streets, and a soft infrastructure, which encompasses formal and informal intellectual infrastructure for a flow of ideas and inventions (Chantelot et al., 2011). Given this organization, business clusters were created in connection with local growth agendas, which would lead to a tendency for a concentration of creative industries and skilled labor in areas where it would be easier to move and better articulate cultural factors of production and networks (Foord, 2008). With the clustering of creative activities, companies could save on spatial connections, gain advantages from the concentrated labor market, and fit into information and innovation streams in the congregation of different complementary producers (Scott, 2019).

Nevertheless, according to Closs et al. (2014), the concept of "creative city" is connected to a neoliberal agenda, which ignores negative redistributive effects. In addition, stimulating standard forms of creative industries can be detrimental to investments in social welfare, education, and health (Miles, 2014). Landry (2008) recognizes the need to consider the organic potential of a city but suggests a "toolkit" of standard procedures to generate an ideal type of "creative city" that does not exist even in many developed countries. This ideal type does not correspond to the socio-political and cultural realities of various cities around the world, such as urban violence – with threats such as drug trafficking, militias, and paramilitary groups – and the difficulties of the production flows towards the main markets, an argument not fully explored by Scott (2019).

Some elements developed by mainstream authors (Chantelot et al., 2011; Landry, 2008) – the mental openness and the strong recognition of diversity in creative cities towards the promotion of social, economic, and organizational innovation – need a critical approach. It would not be possible to imagine, for example, the existence of creative cities in authoritarian or semi-authoritarian countries. Nevertheless, if one considers the People's Republic of China, Beijing and Shanghai are often cited as "creative cities" even by Landry (2008) and Florida (2002). Analogous situations can be seen in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia, as well as Africa and Latin America. The motivation to generate a creative city does not necessarily presuppose the coordination of efforts among different levels of government and the citizens, although many mainstream authors such as Landry (2008) see the government and population engagement as a prerequisite for its development. The stimulus for creative industries and the formation of creative territories – including creative cities – can be associated to nationalism, separatism, and repressive strategies to stimulate the sense of people's belonging and divert their attention from mobilization for a better life, particularly in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes.

The idea of creativity is not a strong criterion for the establishment of a creative class because of the multiple demands from each creative industry and the imbalance of wages and working conditions. It is also difficult for creative professionals to perceive themselves as members of the same class, given that many of them cannot identify what they have effectively in common with other members. There may be clashes among members of the same or different creative sectors. The lack of unity undermines the internal cohesion a class presupposes.

According to Florida (2002) – one of the most important mainstream authors –, development is based on three "T's": "talent", "technology", and "tolerance". More recently, each "T" has been explored more deeply by other authors, such as talent. Comunian et al. (2021), for example, develop the concept of "the economics of talent" and bring the notion of human capital and its relationship with creativity. Florida (2002, 2005) argues that "creative class" occupations may promote social inclusion and reduce disparities, but systemic constraints are marginalized in Florida's reflections. Talent or individual and collective skills and abilities for technology cannot be developed with critical gaps in education. The notion of tolerance does not necessarily change people's identity, so that derogatory visions about differences can persist and be accentuated in the creative class. Creative economy and creative class might be idealized, but women, LGBT and black people and lower-income individuals are not free from oppressive relationships through their participation in the creative class (Proctor-Thomson, 2009), especially in the developing world, where exclusionary regimes are rooted in the context of historical relations of domination and segregation. Many creative sectors are still based on informality and fragile labor relations, but mainstream authors typically argue that creative occupations have higher levels of satisfaction because of the producer's cultural and creative involvement with his/her product (Bendassolli & Wood Jr., 2010; Howkins, 2001; Tams, 2003).

More recently, Florida (2017) has recognized the asymmetries between the salaries of the most skilled and the less skilled creative workers, but they become more explicit when the particularities of the developing countries and the low-income regions in developed states are considered. Kemeny & Storper (2020) have highlighted the existence of development gaps between superstar cities and deindustrialized and struggling rural regions, and Florida et al. (2021) have investigated the socioeconomic and political impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on cities and metropolitan areas. Although these authors recognize that the transformation of the winner-take-all economic geography and spatial inequality of the global city system will not be altered, they propose short-term and long-term social transformations in the structure and morphology of cities which, for example, depend on the length of the pandemic. When the reality of peripheral areas of the world are considered, it is not possible to say that they handle the effects of the pandemic and the more structural issues related to development gaps effectively, which makes the recommendations made by these authors extremely concentrated in the dynamics of developed states and regions, despite their recognition of asymmetries even in these areas. The particularities of creative economy, creative cities, and creative class in other parts of the world remain underexplored.

4. Discussion

The alternative and critical analytical approaches presented below address many limitations of the arguments developed by mainstream authors and bring different insights related to creative economy and its correlated themes.

4.1 Neo-marxism

According to a neo-marxist perspective, the deepening crises of capitalism came with the so-called capital restoration, articulated on three bases: productive restructuring; the financialization; and the ideology of neoliberalism. Rigid capital accumulation shifts to flexible accumulation to respond to the mid-1970 crisis on. The flexible accumulation depends on the diversification of products and services, the multiplicity of labor processes and markets, and the varied patterns of consumption. The emergence of new production sectors and markets was accompanied by financial services, with high rates of commercial, technological, and organizational innovation. The multipurpose workforce must be qualified. Nevertheless, the worker has less job stability and undergoes constant precariousness in labor relations, which are conditions for sustaining the scenario of contemporary capitalism. Capital also works to defragment the class consciousness of the worker. In this environment, hierarchies in the workplace are apparently relaxed, and the worker is encouraged to build work teams to avoid managerial rigidity. He is called a "collaborator" rather than a "worker" or "employee", and the company environment is usually shown as an appendix to his/her home. Personal success is presented as the success of the company as well. This is the logic that motivates creative economy, which reinforces patterns of domination of the workforce in the capitalist economy through different means from the old industrial economy (Netto & Braz, 2006). More recently, Buzgalin (2017) indicates that transformations in the modern economy were highly influenced by changes in the content of labor. The creative workers of the creatosphere – such as artists, scientists, and social workers – can essentially generate unlimited and unique goods that may be available to everyone, but all that can be given away without losing should neither be sold nor distributed. In this sense, the creatosphere becomes a decisive division of social reproduction.

In this scenario, capitalists who lead creative industries argue that the flexibilization of labor, which generates the loss of rights for workers, would be the answer to unemployment. However, in practice, where labor and social rights were withdrawn, unemployment tended to increase. Outsourced workers form a group that gravitates around a small core of workers who have more rights and stability. Typically, they earn less and have poorer working conditions and fragile work contracts. At the same time, unions of creative workers also lose strength in this scenario and the number of unionized workers decreases. Disunited workers lose their resilience to attacks by the capital. By reducing costs of production and introducing new technologies, the capitalist elite has strengthened the strategic control of the new resources needed for cutting-edge production. The concentration of economic power leads to the control of political power, so that such an elite carries out its own politics – making clear the trace of corruption, which it supposedly claims to combat – and marginalizes the participation of most of the world's population in political decisions. The contemporary capitalism in which creative economy is inserted is also characterized by the fact that capital makes a movement of destruction of the regulations imposed on it from the struggles of the workers in general. The financialization of capitalism made financial transactions hypertrophied and disproportionate to the actual production of values. At the same time, the defense of neoliberalism naturalizes inequality and vulgarizes freedom, as if it were "market freedom" – a discourse which is also assumed by those who defend creative economy in the academy and the policy making (Netto & Braz, 2006). The goal of the capital is not necessarily the reduction of the state, but of its cohesive functions, that is, those that guarantee social rights, which can be detected in diverse creative industries. Wright (2018) argues that creative economy depends on and stands for a hazardous and restrictive

labor market.

A neo-marxist perspective acknowledges that the problem would lie not in technology as such, but in the generation of appropriate institutions to exercise human control over technology, including in creative industries. It focuses on the relation among the economic activity of the creative industry, the political power, and the society. More specifically, it shows that it would be possible to turn technology – on which many creative industries are based – into a more democratic process in design and development. To this end, it is necessary to recognize that the values embodied in technology are socially specific and not necessarily represented by abstractions such as efficiency or control. A critical theory of technology escapes the idea that technology is neutral or merely conceived as a tool for creative sectors, but a structure for lifestyles. The choices of goals and extensions are open to human beings, so it is possible to think of those choices in terms of more democratic controls, especially by people who are affected by technological change and who protest or innovate in a more participatory way (Feenberg, 1991).

In this sense, the idea of "social technology" questions the technological structure of creative economy, in a way that can make the most penalized individuals recover their citizenship and stop economic strangulation, as well as pave new ways for sustainability. One of the starting points for the development of a social technology would be the idea of innovation, which, in this perspective, operates as a process from which emerges knowledge that aims to address the problems faced by the involved organization or group of actors. It refers to the knowledge – tacit or codified, intangible or incorporated into people or equipment – that has the purpose to make processes, services, and products related to the satisfaction of social needs more effective (Dagnino et al., 2004), truly promoting the social inclusion that many mainstream authors indicate as a purpose of creative economy, but never effectively reached with the recommendations and orientations they give.

4.2 Post-structuralism

According to Foucault (1977), the spaces of discipline in modern society are permanently monitored and overseen, and some registered acts can be understood as subversion. On the one hand, the subornation of the bodies of individuals to the relations of power preserve their subjection to the authority of institutions such as the family, the factory, or the state, in which their bodies are turned into productive and submissive units and their creative forces are capitalized according to a system of commands. On the other hand, the training of these bodies presupposes their designation for a given destiny, which makes them respond to vigilance, punishment, and examination. In the context of this discipline, the distribution of individuals occurs in individualized, classificatory, combinatorial, and hierarchical spaces, capable of performing different functions according to the specific objectives required of them (Foucault, 1977). Post-structuralism understands that exercises of control occur in specific historical circumstances, in arbitrary logocentric structures that develop mutually constitutive categories between "inside" and "outside" (Walker, 1993).

From this perspective, it is possible to perceive how political and economic practices can make "external" circumstances and agents, not only in opposition to a pre-given entity but constructed by the practices that also define the integrity of some specific group (Campbell, 1997). In the dynamics of the systematic exclusion of difference, the notions associated to a liberal understanding of creative economy and creative cities, for example, are seen as ideals of social organization. Forms of subjectivity production that do not conform to these standards are criticized, undermined, and seen as dysfunctional. By naturalizing such categorization, contradictions in the interaction with difference disappear, and legitimation for actions against diversity – seen as "inferior" – may be created (Jahn, 2000).

Regarding creative economy, it is possible to focus on the moment of creation and production of creative products and services and their consumption, for example. In the first moment, as put above, the idea of tolerance – which characterizes the creative class according to Florida (2002, 2005) and is seen as necessary for the creative process because of the multiple influences it can receive – indicates that differences are not necessarily recognized in creative industries for their social and cultural richness. The creative class may be characterized by cleavages that exclude differences. This legitimates practices of physical and symbolic violence against creative professionals in their own workplace, which are sometimes submitted to disciplinary regimes that prohibit them to express their identities and assume a pregiven one which is defined by people who control the economic and cultural resources in many societies, usually white, upper-class, and heterosexual men.

When the consumption of creative products and services is considered, it is important to highlight that, for mainstream authors, consumption is predominantly cultural in new regimes of symbolic distinction in which consumers define their identities through leisure and entertainment. The access to cultural and creative products and services may be another tool to exclude differences regarding income, race, gender, or sexual orientation, for

example. They reinforce borders between the group and the ones considered "different", because the last ones usually do not have access to the same products and services and are seen as "outsiders". The cultural consumption in the logic of creative economy reinforces the identity of some groups and communities, but it brings the costs of downgrading and excluding people who do not fit into the patterns established by the members of these groups and communities.

More recently, Peters (2019) identified the wave automation of knowledge and research in creative economy with the growth of "platform capitalism", the rise of algorithmic-based knowledge, and the metrics industries. Peters argues that the idea of "creative labor" brings an alternative interpretation to "human capital" and the notion of "open knowledge production" reinvents and generates forms of coercion, not only collaboration. Although there are opportunities for public knowledge, learning and publishing platforms are owned or subsidized by repressive institutions such as the state, which can reproduce hierarchies among differences in terms of access and participation.

4.3 Postcolonialism

According to Said (1978), the understanding of non-Western societies as the "Others" – conceived as dysfunctional, barbaric, or savage, for example – comes from a biased perspective from the West in an attempt of differentiation which served the interest of colonial powers. The subaltern societies in the periphery – which were colonies of great powers – can only speak when their speech is intermediated by a dominant voice, which brings its own version of the "subaltern discourse" (Spivak, 1988).

A postcolonial perspective indicates that some societies tried to consolidate the integrity of their internal "empire of uniformity" by locating diversity – including cultural diversity – as a threat through spatial strategies of segmentation – which segregates poor and rich spaces, for example – and temporal strategies that operate with the ideas of development and modernization, which consolidate difference as "delay", "dysfunction" or "underdevelopment", while societies from the Global North see themselves as "modern" and "developed". The idea of "modernization" – which accompanies the liberal discourse of creative economy – naturalizes and essentializes the sequence of tradition and modernity in "stages of development" in postcolonial societies, which are the main targets of a "liberal pedagogy" of reforms and transformations that seem to operate in these societies as if they were flat tables. This pedagogy reinforces gaps between the pregiven formulas some mainstream authors and decision-makers indicate for the implementation of creative economy and the cultural specificities of the traditions of postcolonial societies. Instead of bringing development, these formulas do not fit the cultural realities of postcolonial states and aggravate their political and economic problems.

The homogenizing impulse of these "creative formulas" is based on a logic that makes developing countries assimilate practices of modernization independently of their cultural background to achieve patterns of "advanced" civilization as conceived by Western powers (Blaney & Inayatullah, 2004). This points to the uniformity of political and economic systems in the light of classificatory spatiotemporal schemes which are mobilized noncritically by mainstream authors of creative economy, which reproduce formulas of development based on creative economy not considering the specificities of political, economic, and cultural realities of African, Asian, and Latin-American societies, for example. Mainstream authors seem to ignore how corrupt political and legal systems, the discontinuities of public policies and the inadequacy of economic measures to develop creative sectors – in a great part, results of exclusionary practices implemented by colonial powers during colonization that were preserved and renovated after decolonization – create barriers to turn creative economy into an effective engine of development (Jesus & Kamlot, 2017). Besides, these authors seem to privilege sectors connected to technological development and marginalize the fact that, in the Global South, traditional sectors such as crafts and artistic activities related to traditions developed before the arrival of colonial powers can generate income and preserve the memory of societies and groups, even though some of these activities are not organized in the same formal way as business is structured in developed states.

However, according to a postcolonial perspective, it is possible to reflect critically about the challenges of "liberal formulas" of creative economy and value the specificity of cultures, economies, and politics of postcolonial societies, stressing the potential for self-discovery and multiple criticisms to inequality (Jesus, 2020). The treatment of ambiguities generated in the interaction with the difference represented by traditional cultures of postcolonial societies can lead to the recognition of the value of diversity and the mobilization of their potential for development (Blaney & Inayatullah, 2004), and the promise of creative economy to really value difference can be achieved. Ponzanesi (2020) indicates that the idea of diaspora and the development of communication technologies have been the bases of "digital diasporas", in which digital migrants are connected users and participants in social media platforms, including creative professionals, and avoid the closures of identity politics. The diasporic digitality allows

people – including creative professionals – to preserve the contact with their homeland and create links through different affiliations and intersections provided by cross-media platforms in creative economy.

4.4 Feminist Approaches

Feminist perspectives indicate the asymmetry in relations between genders and instances of constitution of identities of men and women. In addition, feminist approaches have in common the inclusion, in their academic project, of a political dimension which encompasses not only the overcoming of female oppression, but also the building of a fairer social and political order in which hierarchies of gender, class, or race are questioned. According to most feminists, the political construction of genders implies a higher appreciation of masculine activities and results in an organization of hierarchical social and political activities, which make identities and activities conceived as proper to men or of masculine characteristics have more prestige than identities and activities associated with women or characteristics considered as "feminine". The hierarchy is a political construct which distributes power, authority, and resources in such a way as to privilege men and masculinity and limit women's access to resources, power, and authority (Peterson & Runyan, 1999).

Certain norms and institutions are responsible for the ways people are socialized in gender hierarchies, more specifically for the ways in which they internalize cultural assumptions and define them as parts of their identities. The social control that guarantees this internalization is put in practice by the family, the laws, the market, and the physical coercion. Stereotypes naturalize and justify hierarchical social structures, as well as reproduce power relations between men and women and condition people's thinking to function from hierarchical dichotomies that legitimize multiple forms of domination in different social spheres (Tickner, 2001). In this sense, the progressive inclusion of women in creative industries shows that their presence does not necessarily imply the change of patriarchal values which are reproduced in the ideal notion of "creative entrepreneur" required by creative industries. This notion is a gendered idea that favors masculinized models of flexible work and a type of male worker endowed with entrepreneurial qualities, with full flexibility and greater independence from family obligations. Creative industries such as advertising, TV, design, film, and new media are characterized by intense disparities between men and women, who are underrepresented, underpaid, and concentrated in less valued roles than men. However, such creative industries try to represent themselves as "open", "tolerant", and "egalitarian" (Gill, 2014).

Different feminist perspectives highlight multiple aspects that criticize the gendered pillars of creative industries and work. Liberal feminists, for example, argue that the extension of men rights to women involves the state as a potential agent for promoting equality. However, radical feminists stress the need for appreciation of feminine characteristics and experiences, traditionally seen as inferior in patriarchal societies. The control of men over women's bodies is the root of the unprivileged and oppressed condition of women. Both ideological control – through laws, such as those organizing marriage – and practical control over women – through domestic, sexual, and symbolic violence against women in the workplace, including in creative industries – would be expressions of masculinist principles that depend on the inferiority of the feminine condition, while they value the masculine and guarantee better places for men in society and creative economy. Socialist feminists indicate that the differences between the material conditions of men's and women's existence create the basis for female oppression. The main source of patriarchy is men's control over female, especially reproductive, labor. Socialist feminists seek to show how the separation between productive and reproductive labor – including in creative economy – serves masculinist interests under capitalism. The devaluation and naturalization of women's reproductive labor allows the organization of the capitalist system as it is. Considering reproductive work as an integral and important part of economic activities would, for example, call into question the productivity of large corporations, dependent on the unrecognized and much less paid work that women do in maintaining their homes and raising their children. Finally, postmodern feminists reject the reduction of women and gender to homogeneous categories. Women and men are built by historical struggles over which race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, cultures, and religion intervene on access to resources and power (Monte, 2013), which shows that ideas of tolerance towards women propagated by authors such as Florida (2002, 2005) do not apply in creative industries in the context of the intersectionality between gender and other categories, which marginalizes and excludes different women in multiple creative sectors.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Comunian & England (2020) reflect on the precarity of female creative professionals' conditions and the impact of the pandemic on their creative livelihoods. They were more exposed than men to casual and temporary work, insecurity and balancing between work and family issues, such as parenting and motherhood. This precarity has resulted in multiple forms of exploitation and "flexploitation". The gender barriers faced by female creative professionals show that creative economy has been consolidated as a realm of a privileged class of white, cisgender and wealthy men.

4.5 Queer Theory

Queer theory – inspired by Foucault (1978) and Butler (2003) – reveals inconsistencies in the supposedly stable relationships among sex, gender, and desire. It opposes the heteronormative assumption that the desire for a different sex would be a universal standard and the desire for the same sex would be an exception. Theorists working with this perspective also reject homonormativity, which translates into an attempt to promote a version of same-sex desire that accepts the exclusionary values of the existing society. Foucault (1978) argues that ideas about sex and the way it was lived have changed over time and from one society to another. Power was not conceived as inherently repressive, but also creative. It has developed in the nineteenth century a set of new sexual figures of which the "homosexual" was part. Sexuality should not be thought as a kind of natural data that power tried to keep under control. It would be necessary to unveil how the social production of sexual identities was naturalized in knowledge. According to queer theorists such as Miskolci (2009), sexualities and gender identities can be understood as heterogeneous sets of discourses and social practices, created among multiple elements such as literature, science, and moral propositions.

Butler (2003) indicates the existence of an order that demanded the total coherence among sex, gender, and compulsory heterosexual desire / practice, so that social forces pressure individuals to behave like men or women. The belief that an allegedly given identity exists is a result of these repeated behaviors. In this sense, identities are performatively constituted by the expressions seen as their results. Although the sexed body has a material reality, discourse has a role in its perception: gender should not, according to Butler (2003), only be seen as the cultural inscription of meaning in a previously given sex, but also designates the apparatus of production through which sexes themselves are established. Moreover, that body produces a false notion of stability, in which the heterosexual matrix would be ensured by the repetition of cultural acts, gestures and signs that reinforced the construction of male and female bodies. Subversion of the established order – as represented by transgender people – undermined the compulsory coherence and dismantled heteronormativity through these subversive acts. Miskolci (2009) argues that the study of sexuality and gender identities implies, in part, to explore the intricacies of heteronormativity, such as homophobia present in instruments of interdiction and control of same-sex love and sexual relations and the heteronormative standardization of homosexual people.

Queer theory is one of the subdivisions of subaltern studies that seek to respond to the demands of social groups such as immigrants, black, and LGBT people. It brings a critical response to capitalism, neoliberalism, and globalization, focusing on the supposed neutrality of these phenomena in relation to themes related to gender identities and sexual orientations. It critically points to the interdependence among various forms of oppression, such as racism, chauvinism, and LGBTphobia (Miskolci, 2009). It is possible to say that queer theory shows the incoherence of the discourse which legitimates creative economy and sectors, when it indicates how receptive it is to sexual diversity and, at the same time, LGBT people continue to be targets of symbolic violence in many creative sectors and most of them are excluded from leadership positions in some of these industries, particularly in societies characterized by the strong dissemination of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1993), which conceives sexual diversity as anomaly. The software and other technological sectors are usually the ones in which these patterns are more disseminated.

Queer theorists specify how homosexuality and heterosexuality serve to define each other – heterosexuality is sustained and threatened by the "sexual Other" – and share with some feminist perspectives the development of criticism of normative assumptions about sexuality and gender and the regulatory functions of normalizing control techniques. In the light of new regimes of symbolic distinction in which consumers establish their identities through leisure and entertainment, creative economy is developed in the context of the "pink capitalism" (Branchik, 2002, Drucker, 2015), criticized by queer theorists for its exclusionary and depoliticizing character. "Pink capitalism" is a critical designation of the incorporation, into the discourses of a traditionally discriminated population – in this case, the LGBT people –, of consumption and the capitalist economy by the assimilation of the prototypical model of gay, cisgender, western, white, and upper middle-class men. Men who fit into this profile usually have purchasing power to generate specific markets for them, such as bars, night clubs, homosexual tourism, and specialized cultural consumption, many of which are connected to creative economy and sectors. The market meets the needs of these men by selling exclusive products and services and supposedly defending their rights. Although spaces for consumption offer opportunities for interaction and socialization among homosexual men in aesthetic and physical terms, the definition of consumption patterns normalizes sexual diversity into heterosexual parameters set by the media in the context of post-Fordist patriarchal capitalism, in which creative economy is embedded (Cover, 2004). Rather than challenging dominant assumptions and institutions, the definition of standards demobilizes and depoliticizes LGBT struggles and is associated with a white, middle-class male morality founded on homonormativity. In the homonormative logic of "pink capitalism," social agents such as entrepreneurs segment the

LGBT market by privileging a gay way of life that replicates aspects of the heterosexual primacy with state support and related consumer practices (Brown, 2013; Jesus, 2014).

Regarding the creative interventions in the city, Whitley (2020) shows the alternative experiences of community and economic organization of black queer and transgender women in the context of the violence of neoliberal urban planning initiatives based on the idea of creative economy that strengthen the gentrification of black neighborhoods. Black queer people define the financial and real estate markets as spaces of possibility, in which they implement collectivized models of black private property ownership as an opposition to structural processes of gentrification and black displacement. The queer theory reveals that urban renewal and foreclosure projects may regulate queer lives and indicate ways that queer people may appropriate, refuse, or "disidentify" with property.

5. Final Considerations

While a neo-marxist approach made it possible to see that the notion of "creative economy" reinforced the gap among the wealth of innovators, investors, and those who work for them, this same notion seemed to conceive in a number of situations, according to a postcolonial perspective, that the capitalist underdeveloped and developing states would be blank spaces in which pre-defined prescriptions of socio-economic governance could be replicated, with no attention to the local realities.

According to the post-structural perspective, the ideas of creative economy or creative city conceive that the formulas adopted in their development are homogenizing and contribute to the marginalization of differences, so that a spatial-temporally specific understanding of what creativity is may marginalize different actors in distinct local circumstances. Feminist approaches and queer theory allow people to analyze discrepancies regarding wages and working conditions between the women and LGBT professionals who work within the same creative industry with heterosexual men or among different sectors.

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