Western and Contemporary Global
Conceptions of Creativity in Relief
Against Approaches from So-Called
"Traditional" Cultures

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Abstract: For the past few centuries, many in the West have defined their culture as "modern," "dynamic," and "creative," in opposition to other cultures which they have called "traditional." The primary cultural traits we usually associate with the Western view of creativity have become increasingly global, as Westerners recognize "creativity" in other cultures and as people around the world into being is good and that people from all walks of life may be "creative." Indeed, sharing this perspective is an important part of participating in Western culture.

Thus, New York museums display Yoruba master carvings near Dutch master paintings; meanwhile, Kuwaiti businesspeople talk about Amer innovation with their Indonesian counterparts; and artists, scientists, and musicians move from country to country with relative ease, frequently at the same time, ethnic, national, and religious rivalries are widespread and acute, and that the "global culture" we believe exists is itself largely the result of history. In fact, because our Western culture is so dominant globally, we have the power to propagate false or at least distorted images. Rural Pakistanis might encounter images of Brazilian creativity filtered through the prism of American advertising. And when people speak of "creativity" as a phenomenon in their own culture, it is not a normal part of their languages, and because the West has succeeded in influencing these people's global culture tends to overwhelm all unique group identities.

Group cultural identity may be based on many factors, but having a certain degree of common belief and customs persisting over time is fund members and following generations have to the customs and beliefs they've inherited, the more the group may be called "traditional." While the themselves created and have evolved, their originators are often given great reverence, and new traditions inevitably arise, virtually every society seems incompatible with their most important inherited beliefs and customs. It is easy to see, therefore, how more "traditional" cultures are the group's tendency to maintain the West's economic, military, and technological power produces direct social-material changes in the lives of the population the past and one's identity and to celebrate the "new.

In fact, the myriad ways in which creativity relates to culture, identity, tradition, and change call for more thoughtful examination in today's multicultural context. Surely we can say this because the assumed cultural identity of the West includes relative commensurate with the "modern" science and technology, democracy, individualism, and the Greco-Roman-Judeo-Christian-European heritage (Gogwilt, 1995, p. 15). We like Japan and Taiwan might be included in the group, and then the "West" dissolves into "Global Culture."

The primary cultural traits we usually associate with the West began to form in the Renaissance when feudal structures started to break down as authorities, questioned traditional assumptions, and attempted to distinguish between the "traditional" and the "new." These challenges were aimed at 14th-16th century European travellers and explorers who marvelled at the sights and customs of Mesoamerica, China, India, and Africa. But the answer to the conquistadors' realization that European military technology gave them the power to dominate and pillage those other cultures. The long-stan economic, military, and technological power produces direct social-material changes in the lives of the population the past and one's identity and to celebrate the "new.

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The Western World's Perception of "Traditional" Cultures

For most of us, "the West" is both a geographical term and a cultural-political-economic one. Critics and admirers alike, "Westerners" and others pertaining to Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand, though some people in these countries may not seem "typically Western," while Africa, Brazil, and elsewhere may seem very "Western." We can say this because the assumed cultural identity of the West includes relative commensurate with the "modern" science and technology, democracy, individualism, and the Greco-Roman-Judeo-Christian-European heritage (Gogwilt, 1995, p. 15). We like Japan and Taiwan might be included in the group, and then the "West" dissolves into "Global Culture."

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This power helped legitimize the relatively new cultural traits, and Europeans subsequently distinguished themselves from other peoples in the cultures (such as the Chinese) who have viewed themselves as "civilized" and others as "barbaric," the imperialistic "successes" of the West throughou"advanced" and others were "backward" or "primitive." While some Western thinkers, like Rousseau, de las Casas, Montaigne, and Swift critique Western/non-Western opposition to the extreme of truly human vs. animalistic.

A certain degree of respect achieved toward the end of the 19th century substituted the terms "modern" and "traditional," but the West has conti and others as "static." Today, we still commonly think of a culture as "traditional" when we believe its social roles, customs, and beliefs are "fixed past and are not easily transferable to other peoples or other regions—as opposed to what we think of as our diverse, continually changing, ever-evolving structures of traditional societies determine what people can do and say, while in our "modern" society, what individuals do and say supposedly e p. 287; Babcock, 1993, p. 90). In other words, a "traditional society" determines the conditions of creativity, while a "modern society" is determin
in the West generally consider their society superior for this reason.

In line with this sense of superiority, Western thinkers of the Enlightenment era, such as Herder, formulated theories of history in which people stages, starting with nature and primitivism and progressing until they reach the heights of advanced, modern civilization. Europeans sought their language, folklore, archeology, as well as history. Through ethnography and comparative religions, they also explored the peoples they had colonized development. And what they found fascinated them. Centuries earlier, Europeans had been filled with curiosity when the explorers brought back "New World;" by the end of the 18th century, "orientalism" had swept European and American art and fashion, and the "noble savage" ideal was Emerson, Müller, and Schopenhauer found inspiration in Asian philosophy and religion. By the end of the 19th century, the ethnographic museums soon thereafter, Western artists began to adopt ideas from "primitive cultures." In the twentieth century, the end of direct, political colonialism, the civil rights movements in the United States, and the rise of global media, trade, and tourism, have allowed for a new level of appreciation for so-called "traditional" be because the West's great dominance has led to the virtual disappearance of many of these cultures, and we are concerned about losing all mems excellence of certain individuals, traditional customs, and creations of traditional peoples.

Surely, one of the ironic results of the West's desire for novelty is that, today, we are intrigued by the countless "traditional" artifacts we find an us because they seem new to us, many of us also believe, as Freud did, that the "primitive" expresses our innermost or original selves. Like Gaugia we cannot reach exotica abroad, we look at the objects in our museums or buy them in our galleries and boutiques. Intrigued by the ancient "cre incorporate them as novel and mysterious elements in their works, and our teachers review them in the classroom as "multicultural" supplements adorning, too, play upon the exotic and adventurous dimensions of these "primitive" cultures.

Because we're often unknowable about these other cultures, creations of theirs that appear novel to us may actually be mass-produced for be very naive; but serious Western scholars and art collectors visit these cultures and make a point of determining what are unique and culturally s are, the Western focus on the objects as individually valuable artifacts isolates and abstracts them from the much larger cultural fabric of which th might value these works as artistic masterpieces or as "expressions of culture," most people in the West also value them as commodities, and this i the culture from which we seek to acquire these things. On the other hand, peoples around the world have always engaged in commerce, and took quite pleased when outsiders buy their works and appreciate them as art—whether or not the outsiders understand the contexts of the creations.

Still, most would agree that our appreciation is almost always enhanced if we do understand the cultural backgrounds of the creations. The prot someone else's, is no easy task. Just as we implicitly define something by clarifying what it is not, we understand a culture as a culture, only by the relations circumscribed and relatively fixed. We ask of any culture, what are its long-standing customs and beliefs. The idea that a society has trait conceptualization. Thus we somehow often think of ancient Egypt or China as coherent wholes, despite their thousands of years of evolution. Cor creative and so dynamic that we ignore the traditions which shape us and have great difficulty perceiving the characteristics of our own culture. C "traditional" has long been an important aspect of the West's self-definition. This is especially the case in the United States, where images of "the: the self-made man," and "the inventive spirit" have filled political rhetoric, are widely believed, and seem to have fostered a tradition of breaking through.

However, there are primary and secondary tendencies, dominant and minority cultures in every society, and these necessarily shift over time. W conservatives emphasize the importance of traditions, but many of these same conservatives share with others a strong commitment to innovation as "traditional" may proudly insist that they are, or may vehemently deny the description as a case of European-American self-deception, bigotry, tribes were described by Westerners as so fixed in their customs that while some tribes were in fact wiped out, others were declared "dead" simply seemed to exist—as if the group concerned was incapable of or had no right to evolve (McNickel, 1972, p. 33). "Traditional" societies may value behavior, but they would not survive at all if they couldn't change.

In many cases, traditional cultures are strongly tied to nature, and while this trait is now often praised in the West, it was long viewed by Weste these other peoples. That is why, even today, Native American cultural artifacts are sometimes displayed in "natural history" museums—sometimes hall from the dinosaur skeletons—as if the people, too, were extinct. It is true that for some peoples, like the Tarajas of Indonesia, social customs, might be so bound to a particular natural environment that when members of the culture move elsewhere, their traditions might not make sense or American Indian nations have experienced forced migration and yet have retained varying degrees of traditional cultural identity; and during a 20 despite significant differences in the ways Native American and Jewish religions view nature and transcendence.

Hardly any culture on earth has been able to maintain its traditions completely unaffected by outside influences. Trade, war, missionizing, touri culture from one group to another, and each group has changed as a result. James Clifford (1988) reminds us that when Margaret Mead studied th find them unconcerned about preserving their own cultural integrity and instead collecting and adopting some Western cultural forms; but as Clif of other cultures to be purists when we are not and never have been (p. 230 ff.). Long ago, trade routes crossed the Americas, Asia, and Europe; rt Marcus Aurelius; the Mongols opened up trade between Asia and Europe; the Arabs tied these regions to Africa; people, foods, and animals were and customs travelled as well. Native Americans and Europeans traded actively from their first encounters. Images of Portuguese appear in 16th ce appear in Renaissance European paintings. Inuit (Eskimo) art went through several transitions as a result of climatic changes and contact with the "Inuit plastic art practically disappeared for a few centuries." After James Houston visited the Arctic in 1948 and collected works which sold well developed, and Inuit carving was reborn (McGhee, 1988, p. 20; Blodgett, 1988, p. 21).

Obviously, the outside influence of modern secular society is not necessary for a "traditional" society to engage in trade or even to mass produc in themselves mean that the society has ceased to be "traditional"—such a society might still strictly limit what may be created, who is allowed to (within that society at least). This was certainly true in ancient Teotihuacan, for example, which nonetheless exported luxury ceramics as early as. Mesoamerica, influencing standards of art and culture throughout the region (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1993, p. 18). This, of course, led to the establishment of new traditions which, in turn, were followed for generations and even centuries. Likewise, Athens in 400 B.C. was excepti and actively engaged in commerce around the Mediterranean, but it still had very traditional structures for creativity.

The term, "traditional," then, is descriptive precisely to the extent that a society manages to circumscribe the realities and manner of creativity by from generation to generation. This happens in part because traditions are sufficiently revered that they serve as models for future work. The tradi comprehending and integrating all kinds of new developments. Repetition and reinterpretation of inherited practices are therefore hallmarks of su cultural identity go hand in hand.

These characteristics apply whether we are discussing a contemporary, non-literate, Hmong village of 100 in Southeast Asia, a complex, tradit present-day Amish community in Pennsylvania. There are, of course, tremendous differences between such cultures, but "traditional" does not me rather a generalization used to describe a strong degree of commitment to valuing inherited ideas and customs. Hence, we are not so wrong in vie Culture as coherent wholes: despite their lengthy histories, they seem to have successfully maintained many key beliefs and practices and apparen periods of time. For these and a number of other cultures, then, the word, "traditional," can be applied, so long as we keep in mind its relative me Certainly, every culture has some degree of commitment to its traditions, and for that reason, even the United States might be called "traditional" held traditional beliefs of the U.S. are virtually identical to the ideology of Western dominated global culture—and this culture embodies certain i
the scientific questioning of assumptions, the commodification of goods and services, and the admiration of the new and unique, which directly th beliefs and therefore the perpetuation of every particular culture. And with the acceleration of global intercourse in the 19th and 20th centuries, th impinge on every society have become overwhelming. "Fundamentalist," "nationalist," and "tribalist" reactions to this onslaught are, as a result, w therefore, self-identity are at stake. It is understandable that many traditional societies wish to circumscribe what we call "creativity," for creativity activities which alter society.

Even many secular westerners today feel concern that "traditional cultures" are being "threatened with extinction." Throughout our century, vast politicians, and others have waxed nostalgic about "tradition," even though, as Edward Shils (1988) has pointed out, "no society was ever as dom appear . . ." (p. 19). Nonetheless, this nostalgia has helped fuel nationalist political movements and has been translated by some anthropologists it traditional style (McNickel: Medicine, 1972).

Many anthropologists play a creative role in explaining other cultures to us and in educating indigenous peoples about how to deal creatively w anthropologists help "traditional" cultures organize against corporate exploitation, lobby for protective but non-restrictive government regulations domestic products so that the culture can maintain its "traditional" livelihood (Deloria, 1992; Ortiz, 1972). The credo of course is that the Western want, but the mere fact of his or her presence explaining how the "outside" world operates is a delicate balancing act between interference with ar example, the organization, Cultural Survival). 9

In the past, and even to a considerable extent today, the West has been far more interested in preserving the artifacts than the people and way of what James Clifford has aptly called "culture collecting:" we grab hold of the fruits of other cultures' creative efforts and put them in museums or

Conquerors have always lusted after "the spoils of war," and even today, despite the 1907 Hague Convention against this, such pillaging goes o against it, international art theft goes on as well. 10 Aside from individual profiteers from abroad, national governments have often disrespected inc National museums of Brazil, Mexico, and the United States display countless works of local tribal cultures that were never freely donated or sold

And of course, mass production from the Industrial Age through today has undercut local, hand-made production by economies of scale and un then, at best, often become folk crafts. 11 To some extent, particularly when traditional works are bought from the creators themselves, this "culture might positively be seen as a type of rear-guard action in which we attempt to "rescue" what we are destroying, even if what we rescue is torn fro positive efforts, such as the U.S. Indian Arts and Crafts Bill of 1990, are aimed at encouraging contemporary artists to practice traditionally, even debate rages over the use and misuse of the terms traditional and contemporary" (LaFramboise and Watt, 1993, p. 9). 12 And this debate is one man in.

Approaches to Creativity in Diverse "Traditional" Cultures

Of the many contemporary cultures which appear to us or consciously attempt to be "traditional," each will respond in a different, creative way to secular society. Islamic fundamentalism is one visible reaction; the political efforts of the "Moral Majority" movement in the U.S. is another. Some might think of as extremely chauvinistic, bigoted, even evil and vicious. Sometimes, cultures embrace "modernism" with such gusto that they destruction. All around the world, people are faced with the task of finding a balance between tradition and change.

If we look, for example, at the Kaipo tribe in the Amazon or the Karen people in Burma, we see them struggling to maintain their traditions (ar face of change. In doing so, the Karen use modern weapons, and the Kaipo use video cameras and western-style public relations (Seibert and Kep things" alter their societies, but Karen and Kaipo apparently believe that the alterations that come with these technologies are less threatening that are creatively attempting to preserve their traditional ways of life, and to a certain degree, they are succeeding; for how long, though, we have a ri against these groups seem overwhelming.

Reactions in our Western culture to our encounters with "traditional" societies is sometimes peculiar. When such cultures look weak to us, as th maintain their "cultural integrity," our anthropologists sometimes go out of their way to aid in those efforts and are concerned, even upset, when I from our culture. On the other hand, when a traditional culture appears strong and rejects our influence, as do the Iranians, we are offended; when especially our government and corporations—are resentful, even fearful.

That is hardly the case for Western tourists and art collectors heading toward Bali in Indonesia, where several centers for traditional art, dance : Balinese to preserve their culture and survive economically. Outsiders, struck by the artistic activities of the Balinese (the whole population seem than elsewhere) often describe that society as extremely creative. However, this perception is based on the assumption that art and creativity are s creative in Bali is limited to what we call the fine and performing arts. Furthermore, except for some recent developments in painting in the last fi Bali seems to have been devoted to following classical patterns. One gets the impression that the same dance with the same costumes and the sam since the middle ages. This is consistent with the fact that in Balinese society,

Actions which are culturally correct (paket) are acceptable and aesthetically valued. Actions which are permissible (dadi) are more or less c not permissible (sing dadi) are to be deprecated and avoided (Bateson, 1972, p. 119).

These generalizations, in their translated form, are true for most or all cultures, ours included, but the encouragement to be culturally correct in United States, people may not even understand what "culturally correct" means, or, if they claim to, will certainly disagree about what fits under t prominent feature of American society. In Bali, cultural correctness seems to be relatively obvious to virtually all members of society, and it seem recognizable correct structures. Within these structures, creativity certainly flourishes, often in ways that outsiders can barely grasp—as Clifford C of Balinese customs and behaviors, even ones like cockfights, might express and serve as "positive agents in the creation and maintenance" of soc calls cockfighting an "artform" (p. 249).

This socially controlled creativity works despite centuries of interactions with other cultures, including Javanese and European domination, dec by many Balinese of advanced technology. Culturally correct, permissible, and impermissible actions are less a matter of law here and in other tra Extended families still live in group compounds. Children grow up under the watchful eyes of family, neighbors, and the gods. Even though child music, they are taught at a very early age the traditional, "culturally correct" dances. Often, young people who might be described as delinquents c longer called "Balinese" by their neighbors, but rather, "Javanese," apparently because the Balinese expect all members of their own culture to fol break the norms as not belonging to their culture, and (b) hold other expectations of them. Here, as in many other parts of the world, the watchful e "evil eye" against those few who wish (or dare) to oppose community norms (Hauschild, 1982). The effect of this type of social structure on cre:

Not to be ignored, either, is that, in any society, the more fixed and obvious class differences and social roles are, the more this circumscribes w creative activities and under what circumstances. Thus, a male warrior and a woman weaver from the same society may be subject to very differen they are allowed some degree of latitude within their respective domains. Both the force of these traditional roles and the possibility of altering th abandoning tradition are displayed in Bali today.
Latitude regarding traditional structures has always been visible as one is distanced from the geographic, cultural, political, and economic center aside from the vanity of rulers, why some people in ancient Israel, China, and Rome argued for greater centralization of power. The countryside in behavior, but standards of culture imposed by or adopted from the capital might be more loosely adhered to than in the capital itself. Conversely, in style which have come to be accepted in the capital. Furthermore, the lower classes will not have the material means to imitate the ideals of those that might create in unique ways—we see this in "folk art" around the world. Indeed, the poverty of many traditional societies has often neededability to buy a new model or even replacement parts often leads to unusual substitutions and imaginative reconstructions.14

Other conceptual factors which tend to shape up what might seem to be rigid societal rules are the myth of the "trickster" and celebrations like prevalent in many traditional cultures. The trickster god or spirit, whether in the ancient Germanic religions or in American Indian ones, serves as comic, or anachronistic element (Hynes, 1993). In the feast of fools, the usual social hierarchies are set topsy-turvy, and in carnivale or mardi gras, ta largeregarded. The dances, masks, songs, and social interactions associated with the tricksters and carnivale interestingly express traditions of creativity is exercised.

Finally, it should be clear that each society, however traditional, will differ as to which domains of activity will be more restricted and which will seem to be given freer reign in Bali than are social relations, commerce seems to have the least traditional limitations imposed upon it (the arts see whole, especially as part of touristic commerce). If we look at a group like the Orthodox Jews, meanwhile, we see that artistic creativity is quite limited. Creative interpretation of the Torah and Talmud is virtually required, particularly of males. Creativity in business has also become characteristic of restrictions and urgings placed upon it by the Catholic Church; even today, however, creativity in this sphere and elsewhere is subject to the relig Sabbath. In the cases of both the Balinese and the Orthodox Jews, there is an interesting and no doubt difficult balancing act between commitments to involvement in the global marketplace, which is overwhelmingly secular, modern, and indifferent, if not outright hostile, to the unique differences.

Immersed as our culture has been in modern, secular, capitalist individualism, we have tended to view societies committed to the preservation of traditions more carefully, we might recognize that the opposite of creativity is not tradition, but thoughtless habit; repetition of a pattern may or may not be a routine, mechanical process; it could also be an opportunity for personal interpretation of that pattern. repeated "types" in the masks and sculptures of ancient Teotihuacan, the variety of images presented and materials used is extremely diverse. Westerners many in the west have viewed "tradition" as necessarily "backward," and repetition as necessarily "uncreative."

It is easy, for example, for an outsider to look at a seemingly simplistic and often repeated image of an animal in clay, cloth, or paint, as clear evidence of primitiveness and lack of creativity, but how much more likely to carry mythical-religious-cultural signification. In this way, the everyday "use object" is integrated into the whole of the cultural web.

For this reason, many museums go to great lengths to explain the contexts of the objects they display from "traditional cultures." The Metroplo presents a 35 minute film of the "Art of the Dogon" of Mali, so that the masks displayed can be visualized as they are used in ritual dances and so the works can begin to be understood. Much less background information is provided to accompany most western art works in the museum's collection, presumably because many viewers are not expected to forget that there are other notions of it. Indeed, the focus on newness in our conception reiterates the common ground between Western and traditional societies' views.

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What is more, we are likely to find that traditional cultures utilize their creations in multiple ways. Wooden paddles of the Northwest American because they are often elaborately carved, they may also serve as decorative pieces when not in use; they are given as gifts, usually from a man to another. In the West today, cutlery may have intricate designs and be given as a special wedding present—but the phoenix or serpent images on that cutlery are merely decorative; these images always visible as one is distanced from the geographic, cultural, political, and economic centers of power in a society—that is one reason, it should be clear that each society

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peoples were attempting to grapple with these issues in diverse, creative ways. Narratives explicitly confronts the issues of tradition and change, power and resistance, art, technology. Hemisphere reveals their struggles and joys in exploring each other's traditions and unique creations. Sponsored by the Smithsonian, these fifteen individuals spent two years seeking out Indian culture. In one 1994-95 exhibit, "The Journey of Interpretation," individual creations are compared from the perspectives of improve it. Irony and humor no doubt help. Beyond that, the Smithsonian's Museum of the Indian Market" (Heard Museum). Some members of Indian and other "traditional" cultures find themselves strait-jacketed by the dominant society's fascination with and willingness to purchase traditions. For example, according to Silko, Pueblo people are happy to listen to two or three different versions of the same event or the same humma-hah story | stories from the age when human

Even conflicting versions of an incident were welcomed for the entertainment they provided (Silko, p. 680).

Story telling is a highly creative art, even when the stories are handed down generation after generation and the content is revered as sacerdotal storyteller as onavumi, "one who loves creativity" (Watson, 1997, p. 61). And some tellers can weave their stones into great epics: the written w viewed today as the product, frozen in time, of a long tradition of creative story-telling and singing about legendary events.

In a sense, this oral "tradition" allows for greater creativity than does our literary tradition, despite Western prejudices to the contrary. While the oral traditions, its original concept provides the audience the same quality of the performances and may become resistance in the community to major alterations of a classic, but there may also be genuine enthusiasm for an unusual but respectful rendition. In the director formally determine what an actor is supposed to do, he or she might exhibit great creativity in playing out the role. And here we can see the functions in our culture, too: Western actors, dancers, and musicians will probably not keep their jobs if they fail to display any creativity, or conv the director's and/or audience's conceptions of the piece.

Reinterpretations of traditional forms by creative artists occur in diverse circumstances and develop in myriad ways. And in the act of creating, important as that of a modern western artist, even though the traditional artist is readdressing established themes (Jhansi, pp. 162-63, 171). As the the creative work of a musician performing classical Indian ragas, A raga is an aesthetic projection of the artist's inner spirit, it is a representation of his most profound sentiments and sensibilities, set forth of a raga, by themselves, have no vitality or force. The musician must breathe life into each raga impossible to describe but brought to it b life. Through the guidance of the guru, and by his own talent and genius, the musician learns how to make the bare notes vibrate, pulsate, c

Shankar himself is an extraordinary example of a modern, cosmopolitan man performing traditional national material and winning audiences for merging his music with Western classicists like Yehudi Menuhin and rock and roll musicians like the Beatles. In Shankar's case, we see a tradition had heard of his power and wanted to learn from and collaborate with him. Through the collaboration, Shankar apparently developed new understand the same time, Shankar managed to resist what he considered the corrupting fetishism of celebrity-dom in the West.

Another interesting example is that of Willie Seaweed, an early 20th century Kwakwut Util (Kwakiutl) Indian from British Columbia. Trained a traditional responsibilities included wood carving for his tribe. Seeing his people decimated by disease and succumbing politically, culturally, and Seaweed carved both to restore pride to his people and to show Anglos the greatness of his tribal culture. In doing this, he modified traditional the today by both the Kwakwut Util and the international art community. Seaweed's popularity has allowed his descendants to follow in his footsteps, from, and to some degree, transcending their traditions.21

Often though, "if an [American] Indian artist ventures into commercialism, he or she must contend with the perception that creativity or culture 1993, p. 24). Some members of Indian and other "traditional" cultures find themselves strait-jacketed by the dominant society's fascination with "traditional" art. In her critique of the current state of Native American Indian art, Margaret MacKichan (1993), director of the Sinte Gleska (Lako

Look around today at what is perceived as "traditional" Indian art. It usually bears only the tenuous connection to traditional art forms is an outgrowth of the Santa Fe and Oklahoma Schools of the early twentieth century, and the pervasive Pan-Indian Movement. Ironically, the movements was superimposed on Kiowa, Pueblo and other groups of young student artists by well-meaning white teachers, in order to help (p. 22).

So blatant has been the commercialization of Indian artists for the past few decades that Zuni Edmund Ladd could baldly state, "we've gone for could paint his superb parody, "Coyote and Rose Doin' It At The Indian Market" (Heard Museum).

This situation is similar to that of many other traditional peoples around the world, and like some of those people, American Indian groups and improve it. Irony and humor no doubt help. Beyond that, the Smithsonian's Museum of the American Indian directly addresses the consequences of Indian culture. In one 1994-95 exhibit, "The Journey of Interpretation," individual creations are compared from the perspectives of Western art his Americans from diverse walks of life. In another exhibit, "This Path We Travel," an extraordinary collaboration of fifteen contemporary Indian art Hemisphere reveals their struggles and joys in exploring each others' traditions and unique creations. Sponsored by the Smithsonian, these fifteen indigenous groups throughout the Hemisphere which were attempting to maintain traditional cultural patterns. The resulting collaboration of video narratives explicitly confronts the issues of tradition and change, power and resistance, art, technology, and society. What the collaborators found peoples were attempting to grapple with these issues in diverse, creative ways. The Smithsonian project as a whole and the individual participants As this effort makes clear, creativity is hardly reducible to art. Indeed, according to anthropologist, Victor Turner, life in virtually all cultures i experiences which are fertile contexts for creativity.22 When everyday structures and symbols are altered, as they intentionally are in initiation rit encounter significant opportunities to consider and recreate themselves. What is more, according to Turner, every period of social upheaval and r response. Indeed, as Jacob Neusner (1989) has said about the Jewish people's response to the brutal oppression they have often experienced, seer forces may actually provoke some to believe even more strongly in the creative power of their tradition (pp. 198-99).

Bearing this in mind, we should recognize that no matter how striking the artwork created by a member of a "traditional" culture may be, probe like the Kwakwut Util can be viewed as creative is in the ability of the remaining members of this tribe to survive as a group at all, given the epid they suffered a century ago and the "upheaval and reorientation" accompanying the global market today.

But adapting traditional culture to new circumstances is a universal experience. This is true, whether, for example, an artist or thinker enthusiasts
another culture, whether he or she simply attempts to deal with the societal changes taking place, or whether the person is making a desperate atte
win favor economically or politically from a dominant outside culture. The process of adapting tradition to changed circumstances will always in
inventiveness, and/or imaginative expression, and in some cases, it may involve such significant creativity that it leads to a more powerful tradition

The survival of a group's traditions through change would seem to require that the members of the group strive for their common good, but this mat
ner, as Dan Nachingha of the Tewn-Hopi nation has remarked (This Path We Travel). The fact that we know the names of artists like Nachingha
women, and that we can purchase their creations, shows clearly that these individuals not only maintain connections to their traditional cultures bi
capitalist, global culture as well.

However, to the extent that an individual emphasizes traditions at all, that person necessarily also asserts his or her affiliation with a group of p
merely by blood but also by common beliefs, particularly religious beliefs. This has a direct influence on the creative process. For example, no ma
their work to the outside culture, those we've mentioned and many others are inclined to practice meditation, prayer, ritual offerings or cleansings.
part of preparing to do any kind of significant work. Of course, this is the case with Tibetan Buddhists, orthodox Jews, and others copying sacred
worshipper carves an idol or paints an icon; but special preparatory efforts are common for a wide range of creative activities in a number of tradi
abstaining from sex and alcohol for some days before a major creative project is common in many cultures; individuals who are known not to abs
carrying out the project, or otherwise punished. In many cultures, lengthy prayers to the divine and recitation of ancestors' names often precede a
in some way to moderate the significance of the individual self by focusing on the larger realities of community, universe, and the divine. In the W
such rituals, but these rituals are entirely a personal matter, subject to change, and rarely an issue for the community; the society at large cares far
it came into being or about the spiritual or moral perfection of the creator. The character of the process is of greater importance in traditional socie
perceived as part of a larger web of relations.

Religion
In many respects, how does the practice of a society coexist with a "traditional" sense of the centrality of religion. Religion expresses and determines what people
how it is structured, how people should behave. One common form of behavior in traditional societies is, accordingly, ritualistic, because in religi
shared reality is reinforced. In a positive sense, religion highlights and sanctifies; in a negative sense, it restricts: where there is reverence and ritu
not be done. While Americans may buy and sell paintings of the Madonna and debate in Congress whether Serano's painting, "Piss Christ," should
challenges might find the sale of religious objects incomprehensible and the mere thought of Serano's work utter blasphemy. In recent years, Mosler
condemned to death for what seems to outsiders a less offensive critique of Islam. Obviously, while many creators have been accepted by their so
history have been killed, tortured, censored, excommunicated, ostracized, or ignored.

In the West, the Biblical distinction between divine creating and human doing dominated conceptions of creativity for centuries, and in line wit
supposed to follow divine commandments; the pursuit of novelty was viewed in many cases as irrelevant or evil. Major segments of American so
at the same time share the common national ideology of creativity, which in some respects contrasts with that perspective. Of course, there is no s
"American" view on creativity or anything else: different denominations and individuals are more or less "traditional" in their attitudes, and will, cre
ativity that others accept. Nonetheless, because commitment to the dominant Western conception of creativity includes a willingness to reject t
new, it poses a threat to religious belief. Because religion is about "ultimate reality" (Tillich, 1955), commitment to it will inevitably prevail over
This is why Hindus, Buddhists, Taoists, Native Americans, fundamentalist Christians and Moslems, and orthodox Jews, despite all their differen
t the prevailing Western conception of creativity. This conception, is, they might say, egoistic, immoral, aggressive, blasphemous, destructiv
illusory."

A brief look at some of the major Asian religions may be illustrative. Many Hindus and Buddhists, for example, might say that all our seeming
Unlike the Biblical God, the Hindu gods create and destroy endlessly, and we humans are on a nearly endless wheel of birth, death, and rebirth. T
amount or greatness of external creations will break this wheel—only enlightenment (moksa, nirvana) will. For Hindus, moksa involves the disso
Brahman; for Buddhists, nirvana involves the realization that there is no self, that the Buddha-nature is our nature, and that when desire ceases, s
Creativity in the Western sense is absent from common Hindu and Buddhist perspectives: either nothing new ever comes into the world, or the
insignificant things. Individuals who desire to create something new live in ego illusion. There is nothing to create: "Thou art that... true thuness" H
and "empties himself of everything" (Book 16), because it is the empty space in the clay vessel which makes it useful (Book 11). Not fullness, but
aesthetics. This was the case with medieval Chinese landscape paintings, Zen gardens, and poetry, and it continues to be the case even in heavily i
concept of ma refers to the "between," the space within which everything takes place. As famed architect, Fumihiko Maki, has said, "We appreci
The goal is not to fill the void or to impose shape or order on the world through human will, but to be receptive to the nature of the cosmos and mo
mother of all things, and he who sees this knows his own nature and "the Way."

Therefore the sage goes about doing nothing,
teaching no-talking.
The ten thousand things rise and fall without cease,
Creating, yet not possessing,
Working, yet not taking credit.
Work is done, then forgotten.
Therefore, it lasts forever (Book 2).

The Western belief in invention and novelty and the West's celebration of individual accomplishment seems as foreign to this view as possible. does in fact take place—while the sage supposedly takes no credit for what he does, Taoists in fact venerate Lao Tzu as the author of the Tao te ch

To adherents of the various religions of the world, each one's own religion does not appear as a "creation," but as the "truth" regarding "ultimate
look in amazement at the creations we call religion. The various religions have also thus far been the most powerful source of human creativity or
architecture, etc. And in traditional societies—as opposed to secular ones—religion continues to be the principal domain of creativity.

Religion doesn't merely strongly influence most aspects of a society's life, it also is the context for great intellectual/spiritual creativity on the part of artists to expound their religion. Just as an artist's commitment to following a tradition does not preclude the possibility of a unique interpretation or creative interpretation of that faith. Indeed, the histories of the world's religions show an ongoing struggle between doctrinal uniformity and creativity. The fact that Jesus and Paul, for example, clearly viewed themselves as faithful Jews while creating what we call "Christianity" and that Luther as an essential Christian tradition when they opposed the Vatican and created Protestantism shows that religious traditions are tremendously fertile in promoting new ideas and often in dispute.

But of course, a "traditional" society is one in which a common consensus frames such disputes and all the creative interpretations of the particular primary frames for maintenance of this framework. As noted earlier, not tradition, but thoughtless repetition or routine, seems to be the opposite of carried out "by the letter" without "the spirit," the tradition either ultimately dies or is reborn thanks to a new, creative interpretation.

For many religions and traditional societies, myths of creation play a significant role in rearing the adherents. Tied to the cosmological myth or introduction of various human activities or customs: myths of the first hunt, the control of fire, the beginnings of agriculture, the origins of the human species, etc. are the cosmogonic myths (p. 158).

...as well as the construction of the Alcazar, the Church of San Francisco, and the Arc de Triomphe. And in traditional societies—as opposed to secular ones—religion continues to be the principal domain of creativity.

The socially sanctioned response to such questions is that it is a matter of perspective. The moment when such religious objects are put up for sale to outsiders should probably be defined as the moment when the society stops being "traditional.

...something mass produced almost always as "uncreative." In a religious society, however, even a cruelly made or mass-produced icon will be saved as a matter of perspective.

Clearly, the question of ownership of particular creations reveals a stark difference in worldview between "traditional" and "modern" societies. Collectively own and venerate our national parks, the Capitol, Independence Hall, etc., and the loss of these would be viewed as a national tragedy. We look at human creations as human, not divine. And even the most important ones are for sale ("privatization") of national resources is a political buzzword in Europe and America, and Russia's souvenirs, including the capsule from the first human space exploration in history. In the "Global Marketplace" the differences between cultures transformed into monetary data and transferred electronically around the world with dizzying rapidity. In the "embedded economies" of traditional societies, and nature determine or at least take precedence over economic activity, even for those living at subsistence level.

Furthermore, while both traditional and non-traditional societies might treasure that which is unique, modern secular culture tends to treat that as something mass produced almost always as "uncreative." In a religious society, however, even a crudely made or mass-produced icon will be saved as a matter of perspective. It usually cannot be discarded or repaired, even if it is ugly, torn, or broken, except through some special rituals, if at all. The moment to outsiders should probably be defined as the moment when the society stops being "traditional."

The commercialism of Western society is tied to two particular inventions which reveal precisely where the line is to be drawn between our "m" ones: laws of patent and copyright. These laws, first developed in 1474 in Venice, and around that time in Florence and London as well, have evolved into a normal feature of Western, and increasingly, global society. These laws affirm the importance of what is new and seek to prevent imitation or the award of copyright and patent only to that which has not been done before. We have government offices for these legal designations, and individuals or groups under these designations—because they can help them attain money and therefore power.

How different in a "traditional" society! The legal protections we grant individuals and corporations against their competitors would make little difference to the community if it is the primary goal. And our concept of plagiarism would make little sense in a culture where creativity can best be understood as...
could say that a traditional society dictates, "you must imitate," while our society demands, "you dare not." 28

Corresponding to this difference are other important ones regarding social roles and education. While every group socializes individuals and how societies stress not only the imitation of inherited creative paradigms but also the continuation of long-established social roles. Certain clans may which are different from those of other clans. Men and women will often have different opportunities and will not be allowed to encroach on each systems of apprenticeship. In some cultures, only a very special calling, coming from a vision or some other powerful source, will entitle someone role. In any case, definitions and expectations of social roles will be much clearer in a traditional society.

That is why, for example, when Helen Cordero created her clay storyteller figures and thus broke gender boundaries and altered the artistic tr as a minor revolution within the culture (Babcock, pp. 7011). While this clearly shows that such changes are possible, it also shows how rare such however true it is that 'there have always been gifted individuals who can bend the culture in the direction of their own capacities' (Benedict, 193: degrees, and "traditional" cultures resist it especially.

In the dominant Western society there are some parallels to the role structures of traditional societies, but the ideology of merit over inheritance power of a money economy lead to considerable shifting and revision of roles. In the West, there are books and courses on creativity and even "ci West proclaim that everyone can and should be creative. The notions that women as well as men, and that people of all ages and classes should be creative pursuits within the same realm of activity is inconsistent with the beliefs and structures of many traditional cultures, and that is why, for women's rights is causing major tension. (This is true of course even in the "more developed" West, where traditions regarding gender roles are st

It is often said that a major difference between "modern" and "traditional" societies is that the former is technologically-oriented and the latter : though traditional societies certainly have their technologies, "primitive" as they may seem to those in the "developed" countries, and though Wes "aggressively" it may seem to traditionalists). In truth, a desire to live in harmony with nature, and scepticism, even outright hostility, to some tec least since the Romantic era. And, as we've seen, "traditional" peoples today may in fact use "advanced" technologies while attempting to maintain entirely a matter of the technology itself, but of the attitudes toward it: does the new technology fit with the community's needs? Does it contradicted: traditional society understands the natural environment to be the source of most of its physical needs, and to the extent that it perceives the earth, that society will strive to make sure that any new technology it adopts fits with "the ways of nature."

In some respects, "modern" society's commitment to the "scientific method" seems to distinguish it from "traditional cultures," but it is a common traditional cultures don't routinely formulate questions, employ trial and error, and seek to verify judgements through experimentation. What is di realms of existence to which those methods may be applied—for the central tenets of religion and community well-being are based on the authori priori truths about these realms, and taboos against crossing them.

That is why it is virtually inconceivable that a "traditional" society would accept the kinds of challenges to and criticisms of its core values that First Amendment Rights from the U.S. Constitution, our Supreme Court has allowed all manner of protest against the Constitution, almost any va burning of the U.S. flag, etc. This would hardly be tolerated in most societies insisting on the integrity of their cultural traditions and on the respo

As we've seen, however, things are not so absolute. We must remember that mainstream Western culture (never a monolith) acted very much lil Einstein is revered as a hero by many in our century, Galileo was denounced as a heretic in his day. And today, many "conservatives" in the West : occurring in the society and work doggedly to assert "traditional values" in the political and social realms. Indeed, many people in the West have , determines how they proceed in life, what kinds of questions they will entertain, and so on. As the displays of censored works in the 1991 "Play o Museum made clear, our society certainly has its limits and regards certain forms of creative expression as antisocial, taboo. At the same time, even invent traditions as a means of strengthening their movement (Kwanza, Women's History Month, etc.). The environmental movement, too, p "preserve and protect."

What is more, "traditionalism" thrives in many parts of society, even where there is an explicit commitment to creativity: repetition of classical moreover, is often stated as, "he's another Michelangelo," or "she's a regular Einstein." And even where imitation is explicitly forbidden, it routine colleges and universities." In other words, what the society says and does are not always the same things.

At the same time, millions of creative individuals, like Shankar and Seaweed, have managed to challenge or revise the established beliefs and e without suffering major consequences. We must remember that all the inventions of "prehistory" occurred in "traditional" cultures, which generally disseminated those inventions.

Nor should we ignore how much creativity in the western world continues to follow traditional patterns today. We too, for example, celebrate ci paradigms: Beethoven, Verdi, and Brahms are performed repeatedly around the world today. Indeed, all that we refer to as "classical" music, 31 op, traditional material. The same is true for most gospel and folk music and often even for popular music (Lennon and McCartney's "Yesterday," for more than two thousand versions). This is also obviously true for the countless performances of Shakespeare's plays. Indeed, in our culture, peop forms of musical scores, choreography, and dramatic scripts, which are then presented with varying degrees of individual interpretation. In fact, ci That is why museums and libraries exist. Most writers, for instance, don't merely learn the art of writing but are motivated to emulate or transcen or been provoked by in some way (see T.S. Eliot, 1917). Furthermore, historians, philologists, archeologists, and, indeed, most academics, in their uncovering something new about the past, but primarily by reconceptualizing existent material.

In fact, much of what passes for novelty in our society is unconscious repetition of traditional forms. Those outside a particular field see this m Thus, innovation in business looks like mere variations on a theme to philosophers; creativity in the world of rock music as mere variations on a t Furthermore, as Thomas Kuhn (1962, 1970) has emphasized in his study of scientific "revolutions," traditional views carry tremendous weight supposedly open-minded, critical scientists of our society. Educational institutions inculcate dominant scientific views, and careers are built up by within the framework of those views. Major change is therefore threatening to individuals' livelihoods and society's institutions. This of course, is

At the same time, some individuals in the West have consciously adopted elements of "traditional" and other non-western cultures. This is clea art museums, but also in the music of several Western performers (Tony Scott, Paul Simon, Yehudi Menuhin), in the revival and transformation of Asian religions and traditional martial arts, in the numerous works entitled, "Zen and the Art of . . ." in the respect for American Indian earth spirit faddishness, and it may even be exploitative; without a doubt, it also expresses a desire for some of the key features of traditional culture. 32

What is more, one of the perceived features of traditional cultures—community involvement and collaboration—is actually far more prevalent individuality might have us believe. In the corporate world, teams are routinely formed to carry out particular projects, and in academic as well As the realms of theater and film, collaboration is essential, and a sizable number of contemporary artists and writers have worked together as well Despite all this, our society tends to focus on virtuosity and heroic individual accomplishment; and we consider scientific revolutions such as t artistic ones ushered in by Giotto or the Impressionists, as the highest forms of creativity. At first, it is only those who are trained practitioners wit capable of seeing the limitations of that tradition and the value of the creators' new paradigms (Edwards, 1968, p. 454; Schaffer, 1994). 33 In other alters the status quo, we implicitly acknowledge how much of our society is traditional or habitual.

In any given society, all manner of novelty may emerge, but different societies will circumscribe creativity to varying degrees and in various re
phenomena as novel and as significant based upon a) the realms of endeavor they consider meaningful and b) the degree to which they believe in the wider range of human activity considered important, but not sacred or taboo, the more a society looks to innovation as a potential source of creativity will be (Lasswell, 1959, p. 207; cf also Amabile, 1983). Thus, the United States appears to be at the high end of what is essentially a continuum (Eysenck, 1994; Martindale, 1994), it seems impossible to assess whether any of the conceptions which alter the society's traditional living patterns? Some societies are very adept at integrating these new approaches to creativity; others perceive as the Western "devil."}

Surely, the single most important way in which a society is creative is how it maintains social coherence while integrating change. Indeed, in many societies the commodification of creations, the singling out of individual creators, and to some degree, the determination of the relative levels of creativity in different societies (Eysenck, 1994; Martindale, 1994), it seems impossible to assess whether any of the conceptions which alter the society's traditional living patterns? Some societies are very adept at integrating these new approaches to creativity; others perceive as the Western "devil."}

In this light, it is not so much the painting, dancing, and music of Bali which deserves the title, "creative," as the talented maneuvering between tourism and social integration, between Javanese political dominance and Balinese clan authority which goes on daily. Indeed, a key inheritance of the Balinese is the successful transplantation of Indonesian Hindu culture from Java to the isle of Bali in the face of Moslem conquerors in the fourteenth century. In other words, adapting traditional Balinese tradition. And to some extent, every culture must develop the same ability, if it is to survive.

Today, the interconnection of cultures and the intrusion of Western society into all corners of the globe is a reality. Environmental destruction, and the "global reach" of television and capitalism march "forward" without pause. The clothes we wear, the food we eat, the music we hear, the...
Chinese-Americans, when you try to understand what things in you are Chinese, how do you separate what is peculiar to your childhood, to mother who marked your growing with stories, from what is Chinese? What is Chinese tradition and what is the movies? (Kingston, p. 6).

Ongoing cultural identity presupposes that there are clear traditions worth maintaining. But in our global culture, the interactions between cults people's lives are changing so much that identifying traditions may become complicated. How "African" are African-Americans? Must you line up homogenous is either group? How much of their identity is based mainly on the attempt to define themselves in opposition to others? And for the "traditional" cultures examined in these pages? Each group creatively reforms its traditions on an ongoing basis: new approaches are adopted for creating "traditional" patterns which may then foster or block new forms of creativity.

And as we can see in the case of Kingston, as well as those of Naimingha, Cordero, Shankar, and Seaweed, the evolution of the group is accompanied. Because the modern, global culture has so seriously undermined the coercive authority of many traditional groups, individuals are much freer to pick and choose what parts of their traditions they will retain. What is more, the uncertainty of traditional identity allows, even requires, individual self-definition. This is the inheritance of We self-portrait of 1500, in market capitalism, and in contemporary theories of "self-actualization," and because of the West's power, this ideal has co in every culture now seem destined to take on the challenge of "self-creation" that the global culture calls for. Indeed, modernity and global culture whether we would prefer to be sheltered by "traditional" identification or not.

But how consistent is anyone about his or her identity, and who can understand him- or herself outside of a context? Perhaps the "post-modern" perhaps the concepts of self-identity and of group-identity, of "modernity" and of "tradition" are illusions. Perhaps, the word, "creativity," has taken precisely because all else seems so ambiguous. "Creativity" is undoubtably a social construct, referring to some degree of novelty within a given co through our creative efforts right now. Indeed, the complexities of our "global culture" call for ongoing creativity of an extraordinary degree.

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Endnotes

1. This essay is one chapter of manuscript currently in review, entitled, Creativity and Beyond. It examines conceptions of creativity historically contemporary policy issues as well as conceptual changes in our use of the word "creativity" today. I would like to express my thanks for the from: Paula Sensi-Isolani, Chair of Anthropology at Saint Mary's College of California; Paul Giurlanda, Professor of Religious Studies at Sait School of Liberal Studies, Sonoma State University; Stan Bailis, Professor at San Francisco State and Editor of Issues in Integrative Studies; ; doctoral follow in Anthropology at UCLA.

2. Of course, Europeans rarely thought of themselves as a single group. Superior as most seem to have felt toward peoples of other continents an condescension and bitterness toward each other. And of course, chauvinism and ethnic rivalry abounded on other continents as well.

3. This tendency applies not only to the West, but also to other areas strongly influenced by the West. Heavily "modernized" already at the end o similar to that of the West to save traditional arts which were in the process of disappearing. That is why Soetsu Yanagi and others founded the While this clearly reflects the same kind of thinking Clifford (1988) referred to in which we strive to rescue creations from the world we are d nationalism had reached a feverish pitch in 1936, and efforts there and in Germany at that time to preserve folk traditions had multiple rationa

4. Our fascination with the "exotic" character of other cultures is hardly new. Herodotus was intrigued by the Egyptians, Renaissance Italians by accounts of the "noble savages" of the Americas.

5. In this article, I, too, extract elements from diverse cultural contexts, and 1 may as a result do injustice to these cultures. My intention, however, these cultures and their productions in order to shed light on Western conceptions of "creativity" and to point to some common and some difference cultures.

6. Even the outstanding University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver, which is strongly committed to respecting the c the public about them, explicitly encourages its visitors to acknowledge the works it displays as autonomous works of art.

7. These negative portrayals often served political ends, of course. Aside from this, it generally helps a group to define itself by characterizing of widespread Christian view, based upon claims of the New Testament, that the Hebrew Bible was the "Old" Testament, a "Law" without spirit, Judaism as an antiquated religion, soon to die out. The widespread European view of American "Indians" as "primitive" or worse, as "heathen mercilessly with their "manifest destiny" to expand westward.

8. Greek theater followed clearly delineated rules; sculptures of gods were certainly not for sale (except copies which were later available to pilg appropriate human doing was an imitation of the divine ideas.
9. Even anthropologists committed to seeing the dynamic and glorious achievements around the world usually restrict their vision to particular traditions; all cultures are theoretically the subject matter of anthropology. As is evidenced by Lavie, Narayan and Rosaldo's book, *Creativity/Anthropology*, one of the excellent essays included deals with a politically, technologically, economically dominant, or secular society like the U.S. or Japan. Anthropology generally continues to focus on groups of people attempting to live in ways that are "traditional" to their group.


11. In a rural village of Indonesia where my wife and I were intrigued by the "exotic" cloth designs local women were painstakingly creating on looms, villagers dropped their activities, grabbed their meager savings, and rushed out to the nearby road when a truck brought a supply of Levi's bluejeans.

12. In fact, the use of the label, "American Indian Made," intended to support the craftwork of Native Americans, eliminates from exhibitions and enrolled as a member of a federally recognized tribe.

13. This is precisely what is meant by the anthropological focus on the integrated web of a particular society. The parts are supposed to fit with the whole means to encourage and enforce this cohesion. According to Marjorie Shostak's (1993) analysis of the Kung people, however, the "popular notion of demand greater conformity in individuality and creative expression than larger-scale societies finds no validation here" (p. 55). However, she studied seek to repress their strong, creative personalities—because of social pressure (pp. 55-6, 64).

14. In some places, I've ridden on 40 year old public buses for which no replacement parts existed. Local mechanics and metalworkers had managed. Of course, the mere existence of a motor vehicle in a culture shows that its traditions are under heavy pressure from the "modern" world.

15. Hynes (1993) puts it this way:

   Something about the antics of the trickster causes this figure to be enjoyed worldwide. The heartiest laughter within belief systems seems to be reserved for tricksters profane the the most sacred beliefs and practices—be they occasioned by Hermes in Greece, Maui in Hawaii, Loki in Scandinavia, or Agu Tor generating firm adherence to their constitutive values are discovered to be simultaneously and contradictorily maintaining a raft of tricksters who perpe to these same values (p. 202).

   While this clearly shows that "traditional cultures" are not absolute in their commitment to traditions, it is significant that the trickster figure appears as Hynes says, on certain "mythic and ritual occasions." Most likely, the tension released by the parody on those occasions allows mer for reverence for the traditions the rest of the time.

16. The fact that we have to use the qualifier, "orthodox" Jews is indicative of the fact that so many other Jews—the majority, in fact—are far from numbers of them might maintain certain elements of their traditional culture by celebrating holidays, etc.

17. While most museums in the West assume some degree of Western cultural awareness on the part of the audience, many museum goers are premedieval icon or a piece of abstract minimalism as they are to a sculpture from New Guinea.

18. Geertz (1977) writes of "the curious combination of fussiness and sensuality [which] fied Balinese direct toward ritual objects generally" (235 offerings).

19. This articulation is precisely what happens in all cultures: creations are comprehensible and have significance only against the background of modifies those traditions (Eliot, 1917, p. 27; Edwards, 1968, p. 443).

20. On the other hand, however, writing frees us from memorizing the story's content, so that a literate culture can have millions of lengthy works diversity than might exist in an oral culture.

21. There are countless other examples of this. After their 1874 defeat by U.S. troops, Kiowa and South Cheyenne warriors who were imprisoned in Florida adapted their traditional pictographs to small-scale drawings in ledger books for sale to tourists (Norton Gallery of Art). While Sun Yat Sen was leading revolutionary changes in China at the twentieth century, Chao Shao-an of the Lingnan School reformed and revitalized traditional Chinese painting, spurred in part by Western思潮.

22. Compare with Abraham Maslow's (1959) emphasis on "peak experiences" and creativity.

23. Philosophers like Martin Heidegger and many other twentieth century Westerners not associated with these religious groupings might react si

24. This is visible in Judaism and Christianity in a number of ways, but these religions also aim quite explicitly at the transcendence of nature.

25. The cyclical aspects of Judaism and Christianity can be seen in the myth of the return to paradise, the second coming of Jesus, and the liturgical creativity seem to emphasize the relative insignificance of human doing compared to divine creating and establish paradigmatic understanding of the secular West abandoned the hard and fast line between divine "creating" and human "doing" which had held sway from Biblical times to the late Renaissance, the religious and philosophical conceptions of the body's purpose have al

26. Among the exceptions from ancient Egypt are references to the Royal Architect, Imhotep, and a few individually named craftsmen, whose works are not included here. Interestingly, despite the Communist proclamations of the late Soviet Union, the names of individual creators continued to be recognized in a very "modern" and secular, and not religious or "traditional."

27. Efforts by the residents of Corona to repatriate the textiles have been strongly supported by American Indian groups working on repatriation. Smithsonian's Board of Trustees of the National Museum of the American Indian (1991) agreed to repatriate materials illegally acquired, as with Native American religious leaders for the practice of traditional Native American religions" (Lobo, 91).

28. There is no question that one of the defining aspects of modern Western society is its cult of individuality. The U.S. Constitution, for example, while saying next to nothing about the responsibilities of individuals to the society. Individual creations have similar significance in the societ

29. Significantly, the West's interest in the creations of traditional cultures has helped break down the West's own tradition of categorizing art, creating a completely separate: talking about the aesthetics of engineering is no longer so strange—modern art museums have displayed computer circuit boards as objects d'art.

30. American cultural hero, Martin Luther King Jr., was found by scholars to have plagiarized, or at least, not accurately recorded sources, and such plagiarisms are rampant," even at the most prestigious institutions (New York Times, 1990, p. 36).

31. According to Leonard Burk (1994), the western "tradition" of classical music did not begin until Handel's "Messiah" (1742) generated so m
perform it again and again. Until this time, and even a bit later, western "musical life depended principally on novelty, on the newest, latest . . . was performed only with a sense of participating in a revival of something long gone." Since then, of course, large groups of musicians have created masterpieces.

32. Among the countless examples of Western "borrowing" from traditional cultures, I think of the explicit African influences in Paul Simon's album Graceland, the American Indian influences on painter Jackson Pollock, the Japanese tradition on musician Tony Scott, and, as mentioned above, the painting of Braque and Picasso.

33. This has been emphasized by Kuhn (1962; 1970) in his studies of the history of science, by Eliot regarding poetry, and by Shils (1988) regarding the Reformation. Traditional consensus must exist for creativity to be acknowledged as its reinterpretation or rejection (JMB Edwards; Hausman).

34. In a multicultural society such as the United States, the intentional merging of cultural traditions is a realm of considerable creativity and som of the Chicano comedy group "Culture Clash" says, "we've always embraced a kind of Catskills humor—a burrito belt counterpart to the borscht belt.

35. Whether these are "modernist" or "post-modernist" ideas is unimportant here. In any case, this perspective differs from both the Buddhist idea of the primacy of the collective.

36. And yet it is barely clear how the context should be defined. In this changing situation, defining how to judge something as "creative" will be as difficult a problem today to call almost everything and everyone "creative" . . . a tendency which surely begins to make the word meanin

Works Cited


Museums visited in conjunction with this essay:
Asian Art Museums, San Francisco
De Young Museum, San Francisco
Phoebe Hearst Museum of Anthropology, University of California Berkeley CA
Heard Museum, Phoenix AZ
Museum of Anthropology of the University of British Columbia, Vancouver Canada
Ubud Museum, Bali, Indonesia
The Louvre, Paris
Museum of the American Indian, New York NY
Museum of Modern Art, New York
Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York NY
Norton Simon Gallery, West Palm Beach FL
Smithsonian Museums, Washington DC
National Museum of Archeology. Athens