

CHAPTER 1

CREATIVITY: ALTERNATIVE PARADIGMS TO THE 'CREATIVE ECONOMY'

Rustom Bharucha



Building on the premise that creativity is not the prerogative of any particular class, any more so than it can be mobilized equitably by the pseudo-democratic and instrumentalist agendas of the state, this chapter argues against the appropriation of creativity within the premises of the 'creative economy'. In opposition to the profit-making propensities of the global market, it highlights creative principles like impermanence, ecology, and humility, drawn out of everyday cultural practices in the Indian context, notably floor-drawings. Complicating the argument, it does not rule out the possibilities of either the commodification or innovation of traditional artifacts through new modes of

production and distribution, even as it upholds the need for context-sensitive economies. Highlighting alternative paradigms of creativity in the cultures of the 'South', the chapter concludes with a few reflections on how these paradigms can provide new directions for the shaping of a more dialogic cultural policy.

Against the growing discourse that has emerged around the 'creative economy' (Howkins, 2001), this essay reflects on 'creativity' through a web of intersecting concepts and practices. The 'creative economy' has been catalyzed by a series of theoretical interventions which have parasitically drawn on the 'culture industry' (Adorno, 1991), 'cultural industries' (Garnham, 2000, 2005), 'creative industries' (Caves, 2000, Hartley, 2004), the 'creative class' (Florida, 2002; 2005), and the 'cultural economy' (Anheier and Raj, 2008; Cunningham et al., 2008). Oscillating between 'cultural' and 'creative', 'industry' and 'economy', this nit-picking juxtaposition of terms has assumed discriminations and implications of power in policy-making and managerial services relating to the profit-making and social propensities of cultural goods and services. Increasingly, the dissemination of this discourse has assumed a global scale, which would seem to have increased in almost direct proportion to its media-driven and corporate hype. The purpose here is to work against this hype in order to highlight those particular modes and modalities of creativity in the cultures of the 'South' which do not lend themselves to the imperatives of the global economy, even as they seek out their own modes of sustainability within – and against – the logic of commodification.

Arguably, the 'creative economy' (and its concomitant 'creative industries' and 'creative class') have very little to do with the multi-dimensional complexities of creativity as it unfolds and manifests itself in a multitude of artistic and cultural practices. As used by a coterie of predominantly neo-liberal economists, the 'creative' component in the 'creative economy' is at best a catch-word, if not a logo, clubbing together distinct categories like

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'skill', 'talent', and 'innovation',¹ which masquerade an affinity to the world of artists but with no real evidence of the labour and imagination that go into art-making.

At one level then, the thrust of my critique in this essay is leveled against the appropriation and decontextualization of 'creativity' from its diverse manifestations as well as the phenomenological processes underlying artistic and cultural expression. At another level, however, I am equally concerned with the singularization of the creative economy within the strictures of the so-called 'knowledge economy' or 'information society', consolidated and driven by the technologies of 'copyright, patent, trademark, and design industries' (Howkins, 2001: xiii). This equation of creativity with intellectual property would seem to be totally indifferent to other cultural understandings of the economy, where the mechanisms of markets and trading practices may be mediated by the communitarian values of generosity, altruism, and sharing. These values complicate the neo-classical premises of economics regulating the transactions of everyday life cultures. Indeed, without this melding of cultural values and economic mechanisms, as I will demonstrate in the course of this chapter, a vast body of cultural expressions and rituals from diverse cultures in the global 'South' could not have survived over the years. In the process, the livelihoods of artisan communities and subaltern artists from the most downtrodden sectors of society would have been seriously jeopardized.

It is necessary, therefore, to keep in mind that while the emergence of the 'creative economy' discourse goes back barely to the late 1990s, symptomatic of neo-liberal global capitalism and market-friendly New Labour policies, the temporalities of creativity encompass a much vaster history of time. I will provide a few glimpses of those creative practices whose legacies go back hundreds of years, testifying to the truism that 'living traditions' have fairly resilient economies or else they could not have survived and grown over the years.

While highlighting the endurance, reinvention and altered manifestations of traditional practices in the cultures of everyday life, I will also attempt to stretch their assumptions of creativity in relation to the more pragmatic possibilities of commodification and innovation. My purpose is not to demonize the commercial or marketing propensities of the creative economy, but to question their viability at

material and social levels. Arguably, the mandate of the creative industries has not been fulfilled, and its attempt to formulate a 'policy', as pointed out by Andrew Ross, has been 'mercurial' rather than sustainable:

The carefully packaged policy of creative industries will not generate jobs; it is a recipe for magnifying patterns of class polarization; its function as a cover for the corporate intellectual property grab will become all too apparent; its urban development focus will price out the very creatives on whose labour it depends; its reliance on self-promoting rhetoric runs far in advance of its proven impact; its cookie-cutter approach to economic development does violence to regional specificity; its adoption of an instrumental value of creativity will cheapen the true worth of artistic creation. (Ross, 2007: 18)

The systematic failure of the creative industries is substantiated by the even more 'mercurial' transition from 'the rise of the creative class' (Florida, 2002) to the 'flight of the creative class' (Florida, 2005), all in a matter of three years. Richard Florida's predictions indicate the ephemerality of this 'class', even as the statistical evidence of so-called 'creative cities' indicates that rumours of their economic productivity have been grossly exaggerated: the European Commission's evaluation of 29 Cities of Culture discloses that 'their principal goal – economic growth stimulated by the public subvention of culture to renew failed cities – has itself failed' (Miller, 2007: 45). Even if these cities do manage to generate more jobs as Andrew Ross candidly points out, the 'polarization of city life between affluent cores and low-income margins' (Ross, 2007: 28) can only intensify. Florida's euphoric notion of creativity as 'everyone's natural asset to exploit' (2007: 28) is proving to be thoroughly unproductive and may even disappear in due course just as the bubble of the New Economy promoted by the advocates of New Labour in Britain has already burst.

Instead of pursuing this critique of the creative industries and economy,² my purpose in this chapter is to focus attention on the alternative paradigms of creativity to be found in so-called 'traditional' sectors of everyday life cultures in the 'South'. As we will discover, the 'traditional' can also be deeply contemporary, not only in its registers of

resistance to an obligatory globalization but also in its potentially disruptive and subversive affirmation of value-systems which counter the assumptions of the creative economy. Let me emphasize that I look upon this economy not as a threat but as a necessary provocation which compels me to be more circumspect about what I assume by 'creativity' in the first place.

Complicating the epistemologies of creativity

If one acknowledges that creativity is not an essentialized quality, or immutable property, but is better regarded as a faculty of imagination which catalyzes a process of interactions, we would still be relying on a thoroughly nebulous notion of creativity. The rigor in articulating creativity can begin to emerge only when this 'process of interactions' is contextualized within the specific *disciplinary* procedures of the arts, encompassing components like training, transmission, technique, and conditions of work, among other factors that go into the production and reception of any work of art. While these components appear to be abstract, they gain very concrete, if not tangible, manifestations within the *vocabulary* and *grammar* of specific disciplines. To spell out my position more clearly, the creativity of a musician – and not just any musician, but, let's say, a cellist – would need to be recognized and accounted for in ways that would be quite significantly different from, say, that of a poet or potter or video artist. The terminology of art practices is, more often than not, a highly honed and textured field of critical discriminations which facilitates the evaluation of the creativity in question. This precision can border on the prescriptive, as we will examine later.

Let me provide at this point some evidence of the 'texturality' of creativity, drawing on my own affiliation to the performing arts. For my evidence, I turn to a few creative categories from the ancient Indian tract of the *Natyasastra* (circa first century BC–second century AD), one of the earliest encyclopedias of performance in the world. What concerns me here are not the minutiae of technicality relating to the micro-movements of eyes, neck, chest, hands, hips, legs, feet, down to the most infinitesimal signs of psychophysical expressivity. The terminological virtuosity of the *Natyasastra* in Sanskrit would be somewhat out of place in this chapter; it

would also be misleading because the sheer knowledge of all these hundreds of movements and micro-movements does not necessarily ensure the 'creativity' of the performance. Rattling off the minute categories can be an act of pedantry, but where creativity counts is in the actual *embodiment* or *expression* of these movements. Therefore, while the fingers in one hand or both can be positioned in any number of combinations to create *hastas* (hand-gestures), denoting a vista of objects and phenomena and emotional registers, it is *hastaprana* which makes the gestures come alive through the infusion of breath (*prana*). (In a sense, this is not very different from that excruciatingly beautiful line attributed to Emily Dickinson when she asked, 'Do my poems breathe?')

In this embodiment of emotions through breath, one is alerted to the enormously subtle, if not evanescent dimensions of creative expression in performance. Even when dealing with the practicalities of dramaturgical structure, it is telling how the primary ingredients of creativity appear to be elusive, beginning with *kama* (desire), *bija* (seed), and *bindu* (drop), which dilate and catalyze a chemistry of actions constituting the plot of the play. This play, however, only begins to make sense when the entire process is received – or more specifically *tasted* – by the spectators through the experience of *rasa* (literally, 'juice'). I realize that I am merely sketching the mutations of one of the most complex aesthetic categories from the Indian subcontinent, but for my purpose here, I would stress that creativity is not an *inherent* category, but more of a *relational process* in which the thing perceived is shared through a transpersonal exchange and abstraction of emotions.

Who shares? Is it the actor or the spectator or both? Or some other third entity that emerges out of the imaginary of the experience in which the actor, character, fictional situation, reception, and the suspended historical moment of time, are all immersed in one transcendent moment of bliss? While the philosophical intricacy of such questions cannot be answered within the framework of this chapter, they indicate that creativity is not just the agency of the so-called creator, it also encompasses the capacity to receive – and induce – the process of creativity through the imaginative inputs of the spectator/listener.

Creativity is, therefore, a deeply participatory process, which at one level can be linked to the

more current vogue for 'interactivity', as in video games (one of the most lucrative multi-billion products of the creative industries). The difference, however, is that the images of the video game, more often than not linked to raging battles and galactic missiles in outer space or terrorist zones, have already been created by the designer(s), whose creativity is patented and branded. While these images can be manipulated by the reflexes of those who are playing the game, the images themselves are already fixed, though reassembled, quite unlike the emotions and sensations shared in the exchange of *rasa* which are not spelled out in advance. Rather, they can exist only in the process of their evolution in an imaginary space, where the pleasure of the aesthetic experience is at once 'disciplined' and 'trained' through specific protocols, and yet free of these constraints in the actual moment of enjoyment.

The problem of exclusivity

Returning to my broader purpose of attempting to assess the modalities of creativity in the contemporary world, I would acknowledge that there are at least two difficulties with the invocation of *rasa* (or, other such traditional aesthetic categories like *hana*, or 'flower', as formulated by Zeami in the context of Noh theatre). One problem could be that these categories are far too refined and, almost inevitably, they are at once exclusionary and exclusivist. They demand specific modes of enculturation which are, more often than not, linked to the privileges of class and a particular education of the senses. Representing a more heightened form of 'distinction' than Bourdieu (1984) could have imagined in his examination of social and cultural capital in a predominantly bourgeois milieu, one should acknowledge that the acquisition of *rasa* (as a discourse rather than a lived practice) can result in a brahmanical assertion of cultural supremacy, which exudes violence in its regimentation of the senses passing as authentically 'Indian'.

One caveat needs to be added here to qualify the argument. Exclusivity, I would argue, is not the domain of traditional aesthetics alone. Indeed, it can exist in all kinds of liberal modes and forms of creative assertion, exemplifying a plurality of lifestyles and democratic interaction with other cultures and ethnicities. What, indeed, could be more

exclusivist than the notion of a 'creative class'? Despite his pitch for the innovation of new modes of living and generating capital, Richard Florida ultimately lands up asserting one of the most emphatic categories by which people are differentiated and divided: 'class'. Only his criteria are a lot less exacting than those of Marx. Not only does he have no difficulty in restricting this class to 38 million metropolitan Americans, including architects, doctors, lawyers, and engineers, among other professionals who share some nebulous 'creative' affinities to artists, he also hypothesizes his theory on the basis of geographical proximities between metropolitan gay life-styles and wealth-generating creative innovations. It is a sad reflection of the neo-liberal state of our times that an ostensibly gay-friendly and pluralist approach to culture should rest on unsubstantiated differences between those gays who are willy-nilly 'creative' because they live in cool cities like San Francisco, while their counterparts in Kansas City or Poughkeepsie lie *ipso facto* outside the purview of creativity. Both in terms of the politics of sexuality and the equations between sexuality and economics, this theory is frightfully thin.

Having acknowledged that the problem of exclusivity does not have to be restricted to traditional contexts of knowledge, let us now spell out yet another difficulty in invoking categories like *rasa* within the context of creativity in our time. It could be argued that creativity cannot be confined to those art practices which have defined disciplinary procedures, as I have argued earlier. What about those acts of creativity that remain *unrecognized*, embedded in the *habitus* of everyday life, where there is no necessary cognizance or recognition of actions relating to cooking, dressing, washing, ritual worship, and the nurturing of children and old people? Are these actions, the outcomes of deeply internalized modes of acculturation, to be automatically relegated to the domain of 'the social'? And is the social to be equated with the necessities of the functional and the communicative, as opposed to the gratuitous benefits of the creative? Such dichotomies are untenable, as will become evident later, in my description of one particular traditional cultural practice. Before doing so, let me further complicate the thrust of my argument by posing the reverse problematic of exclusivity: namely, the ubiquity of creativity as a universal human resource.

The problem of pseudo-democracy

If the exclusionary dimensions of creativity should compel us to be more critically vigilant of its larger democratic access, it is equally necessary not to automatically uphold the reverse position that 'everyone is creative', which amounts to a kind of pseudo-democratic position. And yet, this is precisely the assumption underlying a Green Paper (April 2001) put forward by the British government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport in its advocacy of 'creative industries'. While the mantra of 'everyone is creative' could be rejected outright for its self-serving rhetoric in making all citizens appear to be equal contributors to the national economy,³ it would be useful to juxtapose its hype with a statement that would appear to be similar, even though its context is radically different. I am referring to the much-quoted statement by Joseph Beuys, one of the most prominent German political artists of the late twentieth century, who in one of his many discursive reflections on art practice had suggested the potentiality that 'every human being is an artist' (Harlan, 2004: 2). At first glance, it would seem that Beuys is merely echoing the rhetoric of New Labour, playing into populist notions of access and non-hierarchical and non-qualitative assessments of the social instrumentalization of art. However, this would be a serious distortion of Beuys's position, which can be more accurately assessed through a scrutiny of his practice and politics.

If 'every human being is [potentially] an artist', this cannot be assumed or legislated outside the actual *practice* in which the economy of artistic form has to emerge through engagements with materiality, ecology, public discourse, and political engagement. For Beuys, this engagement demanded nothing less than an unsparing opposition to the capitalist mode of production in which the cultures of everyday life are cosmeticized and reduced to consumerist banality. In one of his many measured yet radical statements, drawn out of conversations with the public which he regarded as part of his art practice, Beuys said:

The concept of economic growth and the concept of capital and all that goes with it, does not really make the world productive. No, the concept of art must replace the degenerate concept of capital. Art is really tangible capital, and people need to

become aware of this ... [C]apital is human dignity and creativity. And so, in keeping with this, we need to develop a concept of money that allows creativity, or art, so to speak, to be capital. Art is capital. This is not some pipe dream; it is a reality. In other words, capital is what art is. Capital is human capacity and what flows from it. (2004: 27)

The uncompromising tenor of these reflections, and their immersion in an anti-capitalist ideology, which does not stop Beuys from countering another notion of art as capital, is as removed from the slippery rhetoric of Cool Britannia as one can possibly imagine.

While it is not possible here to provide a detailed inventory of Beuys's art practice, which could demonstrate how his politics was actually embodied in his 'social sculpture' (or 'expanded conception of art'), suffice it to say that his alchemical use of substances like wax, fat, felt, bone, copper, fossils, and his active ecological practice in the planting of '7,000 oak trees', along with his blackboard drawings in public forums, provide one of the most exacting, if idiosyncratic, examples of how the so-called 'ordinariness' of culture, as evoked by Raymond Williams, can mobilize 'warmth' (Beuys, 2004). 'Warmth', not in the psychological sense of conviviality and bonding, now fetishized in the much-hyped experiments in 'relational aesthetics' (Bourriaud, 2002) in established museums. For Beuys, warmth is made of sterner stuff and has a profoundly social dimension as well as a spiritual propensity in its capacity to incorporate the world within one's own self-transformative capacities.

This process of self-transformation is achieved primarily through the dynamics of seeing whereby the phenomenon being observed is 'inhabited' by the observer, who lives its 'activity' and 'interconnections', creating an 'inner image of what has been observed' (Sacks, 2007: 1). Through the process of creating an inner image, the self is transformed at perceptual levels which defy the discursive strictures of the 'creative industries' and the 'creative economy'. What is missing in these new assertions of creativity is a theory of seeing in relation to the 'inner space of perception and imagination' (2007: 1). One may not have the courage to affirm the act of seeing quite so unequivocally as Beuys does, but it underlies his advocacy of 'human dignity and creativity' in his celebration of 'art as capital' (2004: 27). While his vision remains

intransigent, it provides alternative points of reference which enable us to work against the grain of the pseudo-democratic platitude that 'everyone is creative'.

Three Principles of Creativity

Having outlined some concepts of creativity punctured by counter-references to the creative economy, I would now like to highlight three principles of creativity grounded in the cultures of everyday life through a focus on one particular practice: traditional floor-drawing. This practice is so widespread and commonplace in different parts of India that its creativity is not even acknowledged. Certainly, it attracts far less attention than the contemporary pavement drawings that one is likely to come across on city streets, where some itinerant pavement-artist sketches the figure of a god or a film hero in chalk. While this form of site-specific, freestyle sketching could be regarded as subaltern art, traditional floor-drawings are more likely to be regarded as part of a household routine. Almost exclusively performed by women, they are to be found outside the threshold of homes, where the floor is cleaned and then sprinkled with rice-flour, which is used to create an infinite number of geometric, floral, iconographic, and decorative patterns. The entire process, which can be completed in a matter of a few minutes, with matter-of-fact and apparently improvised gestures, has no other ritual purpose apart from providing a touch of positive energy to the household by warding away evil spirits.

While the floor-drawings used in everyday household contexts are identified differently in various regions of India – *kolam* (Tamil Nadu), *kalam* (Kerala), *alpana* (West Bengal), *rangoli* (North India) – the fundamental 'creativity' of this everyday cultural practice can be attributed to the tension between the intentionality of the practitioner and the 'self-generative capacity' of the floor-drawing's form as it evolves in actual practice (Mall, 2006: 74). This evolution is as much an expression of a deeply internalized body-memory of previously learned or copied patterns, as it is a response to the *unpredictability* of the form as it emerges through a flow of dexterous gestures, occasional mistakes and visual surprises (2006: 74).

In this chapter, I will not be focusing on the phenomenology of floor-drawing in which creativity is at

once captured and embodied. Rather, I will concentrate on a far more elaborate ritual performance tradition from the southwestern state of Kerala called *kalamezhutu pattu* or *kalam pattu* in which a large-scale *kalam* (floor-drawing) of a deity is made not by household women but by particular castes of artisans, notably the Mannaan from the low-caste Harijan community.⁴ The crucial point that needs to be emphasized is that the artistic creativity in question is not linked to an individual artist, but to a specific community which earns its livelihood through the perpetuation of this practice. In this regard, the category of 'cultural expression', as defined by the editors of this volume, could be regarded as appropriate for the *kalam*, in so far as it evokes a 'collective project' incorporating multiple inputs at the level of community. More precisely, given the religious dimensions surrounding the worship of the *kalam*, the expressivity in question operates at both 'material and immaterial' levels.

I will not be describing here how the *kalam* is made after hours of painstaking labour, in which the body and visage of the goddess Bhagawathy or Bhadrakali (the auspicious and ferocious aspects of the goddess Devi, respectively) emerge out of the earth in an intricate filigree of five vibrant colours – red, black, white, yellow, and green. Nor will I be providing a detailed contextual background relating to the rituals, songs, chants, invocation of the goddess, and oracular transmission of messages by which the *kalam* is worshipped as an offering (*vazhivad*) by the family or temple sponsoring the performance. What does concern me here, however, is the crucial moment in the final stage of the ritual performance when the *kalam* is *erased*, generally by the oracle or ritual attendant who dances on the floor-drawing and wipes the goddess away with his stamping feet and occasionally frenzied movements. It is out of this void, an empty space, which is all that remains of the *kalam*, that I would like to draw out some principles which seem crucial to my understanding of creativity in contradistinction to the tenets of the creative economy.

1. Impermanence

First of all, it becomes necessary to focus on the implications of *impermanence* as a creative principle. When the *kalam* is erased, nothing remains of

its original form beyond the traces of colour smeared on the floor. These traces are collected by the spectators and smeared on their foreheads as *Prasad*, indicating their physical imbibing of the sacred presence in the ritual. Beyond these traces there is no object, sign, or artistic signature that remains, which leaves open the critical question of whether the *kalam* can be regarded as a commodity. Certainly, if one had to follow the traditional Marxist definition of commodity as 'a product intended principally for exchange' within 'the institutional, psychological and economic conditions of capitalism' (Appadurai, 1986: 6), then the *kalam* is neither an instance of decommodification nor anti-commodification. Rather, in its inability to be bought or sold through the very dissolution of its materiality, it would seem to exist outside the logic of commodification altogether.

This argument, however, could be complicated by other processual readings of commodity, which leave open the possibilities of objects 'moving both into and out of the commodity state' (Kopytoff, 1986, cited in Appadurai, 1986: 17). This fluidity informs postmodern readings of commodity, which are determined neither by the material concreteness nor the price of the commodity, but rather by its potentiality for exchange in *situations* in which 'its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other thing is its socially relevant feature' (Appadurai, 1986: 13). In this imagined state of perpetual mobility, the commodity is identified and discriminated not as 'one kind of thing rather than another' but rather as 'one *phase* in the life of some things' (1986: 17). While I will leave open the 'commodity potential' of the *kalam*, which I will discuss later within the hypothesis of a reinvented design, I would nonetheless claim that the *kalam* in its traditional ritual context does not readily lend itself either to the idea or practice of commodity precisely because it does not conform to the principles of 'exchange' at a material level.

The only transaction that does take place in the course of this offering is, at best, symbolic, in so far as the sponsors of the *kalam* pay for its performance in order to receive favours from the gods. However, there can be no unequivocal guarantee that their desires will be granted beyond the reassurances of the oracle. One should also keep in mind that the *kalam* is not just an opportunity for wish-fulfillment but an act of gratitude for favours already received, which rules out the necessity of a

clearly defined 'exchange'. Offerings can be unidirectional in their focus and intensity.

However, this premise opens up the possibility of whether the *kalam* would not be more appropriately defined as a 'gift', which is the term that is constantly countered in relation to 'commodity', at times with unproductive results. Here there is a growing literature with at least two diametrically opposed readings of the gift: those that favour the belief that it is non-returnable, as exemplified in Derrida's eloquent exhortation that 'there must be no reciprocity, return, exchange, countergift, or debt. If the other *gives me back* or *owes me* or has to give me back what I give him or her, there will not have been a gift' (Derrida, 1992: 12, cited in Frow, 1997: 107). Against this assertion of non-reciprocity, there is the more coercive view emphasized by the master theoretician of the gift, Marcel Mauss (1967), for whom 'there is no gift without bond, without bind, without obligation or ligature' (Frow, 1997: 108). If one had to link the *kalam* to the Derridean perspective of 'the first gift', then one would have to qualify that it is not 'purely gratuitous, non-reciprocal and atemporal' (1997: 108), but, on the other hand, if we had to link it to Mauss's somewhat more paradoxical perspective on the gift, one would have to resist the reduction of the entire *kalam* performance to a deliberately calculative and strategic act, despite the intentionality underlying the sponsorship of the performance. Certainly, the upper-caste sponsors of any *kalam* stand to enhance their cultural and spiritual capital and social prestige through the sponsorship of the performance, but these benefits would need to be seen in the context of self-gratification rather than exchange.

Returning to the motif of impermanence, but problematizing it in a somewhat different direction from the gift/commodity debate, it could be argued that the 'invisible' and non-material dimensions of knowledge traditions are not necessarily divested of economic value. Indeed, the knowledge component of the creative economy is deeply invested in the future, *in what does not as yet exist*, which could include unknown enzymes, genes, and software. The fact that these phenomena have yet to be discovered or invented does not stop them from being patented in their embryonic states.

This investment in the future, or more precisely, the domain of the Not-Yet, needs to be contrasted with the *kalam's* deep investment in the Now, in which all times (past, present, and future) coalesce.⁵

The impermanence of the *kalam*, therefore, has to be linked not to an invisible future, but to a vanishing present, which is consciously erased even after it has been brought into fruition. There is a different temporality at work here, which compels one to differentiate between the multitudinous instants of creativity which suggest an 'eternal time', and the more pragmatic, long-term investments of the cultural economy which more often than not disappear into evanescence or crash out of existence.

2. Ecology

The second principle of creativity that I would like to draw out of the example of the *kalam* concerns its *ecological* foundations. Indeed, the colours that enhance the *kalam*'s vibrant form are made out of natural substances: rice powder (white), burned rice husk (black), turmeric powder (yellow), powdered dry leaves (green), and a mixture of turmeric powder and lime (red). When the *kalam* is erased, these natural substances are returned to the earth, providing an unobtrusive yet concrete example of ecological art, which is now being explored by many metropolitan artists through different methods of disintegration and self-destruction in the creation of fragile installations, and the use of perishable materials in art works. These experiments, however, continue to be on the margins of the art world, which defines its capital more assertively than ever before through what is visible and permanent. The technologies feeding the 'mechanical reproduction' of art in the age of globalization have far exceeded what was available in Walter Benjamin's time. Today the original art work gains additional market value through the surfeit of discursive and media representations that surround its replication through the catalogue, the poster, the website, CDs and DVDs – apart from the obligatory invitation card specially designed for the opening party of the exhibition.

If the art market would appear to disdain the less lucrative path of ecology, it is because 'alternative' activist experiments in this field have yet to be adequately projected. Far outdoing the art world in this regard is the thriving business of eco-friendly products in the cosmetics industry, along with other modes of pampering the body through holistic massage services and Ayurveda, in addition to the spa and resort-related pleasures of eco-tourism and

yoga retreats. Tellingly, the state of Kerala is at once the site for the non-commercial, predominantly ritual practice of the *kalam*, as well as the headquarters of the Ayurveda industry. Cashing in on 'knowledge about commodities' which is itself 'increasingly commoditized' according to a global 'traffic in criteria' (Appadurai, 1986: 54), the promoters of Ayurveda in Kerala have capitalized on 'innovations' of traditional health systems ostensibly re-designed to suit New Age lifestyles. However, these innovations can never afford to ignore the lure – and competitive economic value – of 'authenticity', which is subjected to what Appadurai has described as a 'complication of criteria' (1986: 45). Hence, the 'prestige economies of the modern West' can be guaranteed '100% traditional Ayurvedic massage' but with all the amenities of a luxurious spa thrown in as part of the deal, including subliminal erotic pleasures.

While the repackaging of traditional modes of expertise, spurious or otherwise, is part of the marketing game, what is harder to accept is the glib use of 'ecology' in the discourse of the creative economy where there is no demonstrable evidence of any altered mode of cultural production or distribution. Such is the case with the so-called 'revitalization of city landscapes' (Scott, 2008) through a proliferation of 'new shopping malls, restaurants, cafes, clubs, theaters, galleries, boutiques', the obligatory manifestations of the hedonistic logic upheld by the creative class. However, this is not an adequate explanation, as the following passage reveals:

When the landscape develops in this manner, significant portions of the city (though rarely, if ever, all portions) start to function as an ecology of commodified symbolic production and consumption, in which, and in contrast to the classical industrial metropolis, the functions of leisure and work seem to be converging to some sort of (historically-specific) social equilibrium. Even advertising becomes part of the general spectacle that is one of the important ingredients of this ecology. (Scott, 2008: 314, my emphasis)

Indeed, one is hard pressed to understand how 'ecology' can be invoked in such a context without any critical engagement with the energy resources that are surely spent, if not wasted, in the abundance of neon displaying this 'revitalization' of the

city landscape. The society of the spectacle is not known for its economy of resources.

More critically, one wonders how ecology can be inserted into this valorization of the cultural economy without any consideration of the social consequences of any gentrification process, in which local inhabitants of particular neighbourhoods are invariably evicted to make room for the lifestyles of the 'creative class'. The pretence of fashionable 'slumming' in formerly derelict and working-class neighbourhoods now sexed up with trendy bars and clubs is scarcely a symptom of revitalization. Indeed, one could argue: revitalization for whom?

Neither can social ecology be equated with the 'social equilibrium' between 'work and leisure' for a particular class, as the passage above emphasizes. If we have to use the word 'ecology' in the context of this economy, then we are compelled to address the very palpable social and economic *dis-equilibrium* that exists between the 'creative class' and the servicing sectors. It is these disparities that need to be addressed, instead of being camouflaged within the up-market, crime-free, enclaves of liberal surveillance, whereby new gated communities are surrounded by the proliferating hinterlands of the poor.

3. Humility

Against the implicit arrogance of the creative economy, I would emphasize the third creative principle exemplified by the *kalam*: humility. I realize that there are possible misperceptions in such a dichotomy of values, which would seem to play into the reductionism which Appadurai so rightly warns against in 'the tendency to romanticize small-scale societies; to conflate use-value (in Marx's sense) with the *gemeinschaft* (in Toennies's sense)' (1986: 11). Indeed, one does need to be on the alert in order to highlight 'the calculative, impersonal and self-aggrandizing features of non-capitalist' societies, which is Appadurai's predilection (1986: 11). At the same time I would argue that the 'calculative dimension' (1986: 13) cannot be imposed as the only valid way of reading human and cultural interactions within these societies. Indeed, in a more conciliatory register, Appadurai does acknowledge Kopytoff's somewhat broader perspective of 'a perennial and universal tug-of-war between the tendency of all economies to expand the jurisdiction of

commoditization and of all cultures to restrict it' (1986: 17). This 'tug-of-war' raises the critical question of 'the extent to which the logic of the "cultural" is able to restrict the logic of the economic; and of the possibilities of movement out of the commodity state' (Frow, 1997: 144). Furthermore, as John Frow pushes the question into an even more precise problematic: 'To what extent ... can cognitive, ethical, affective, and aesthetic processes resist commodification? ... And what sort of value judgment should be made of these processes?' (1997: 144–5).

In response to these questions, let me qualify that when I invoke humility as a creative value within the framework of the *kalam*, I am not referring to it as a moral virtue, as if all the custodians of the production and performance of the *kalam* are intrinsically good and simple people uncontaminated by the realities of modern life. This would amount to a caricature of the context being described. On the contrary, I would argue that the practice of the *kalam* is inserted into modern life, within a specific space-time continuum, and that it answers the psychological and social needs of people facing the pressures of everyday life. Furthermore, I would acknowledge a dimension of social power upheld by the upper-caste hegemony that continues to patronize the practice of the *kalam* with the support of predominantly low-caste artisans. In other words, even though the *kalam* is a 'traditional' practice in so far as it has a long legacy of conventions and rituals with 'religious' significance, it can in no way be regarded as antithetical to modernity. Rather, it is inscribed within modernity whose dominant values are implicitly questioned, even as they are not directly opposed.

Humility in the context of the *kalam* is better understood not in the context of morality but in its denial of authorship and ownership. Nobody *owns* the *kalam*; it *belongs* to all those who participate in its production and performance, including the bystanders, onlookers and spectators who may assemble to see its performance with no caste restrictions whatsoever. This compels one to open the modalities of *belonging* as opposed to *ownership*, a distinction that is almost totally absent in the discourse of the creative economy. One could push the point further by focusing on 'collective belonging' as opposed to individual spectatorship and critical scrutiny. What is the place for such belonging in the mechanisms of the creative economy, which

have themselves been decisively challenged through new affirmations of the creative commons, if not an abolition of copyright altogether?

Finally, in unearthing the inner values of the *kalam*, one is compelled to open its dimensions of the spiritual and the sacred as opposed to the institutionally and contextually bound rules and regulations of religious practice. These dimensions call into question the implicit secularity underlying the logic of the market outside its religious inflections in certain Islamic contexts of finance and banking. As an offering to the deity, the *kalam* submits to a reality that is larger than the efforts that go into the materiality of its production. This scenario inevitably opens up metaphysical values relating to 'worship' and 'sacrifice' which do not readily enter the predominantly acquisitive and competitive priorities of the creative economy.⁶ On the other hand, it could also be argued that the dimensions of the sacred are not entirely immune to the possibilities of commodification, as we shall examine in the following section within the larger framework of re-inventing traditions through processes of innovation.

Innovating tradition

'Innovation' has become the symbiotic catch-word for 'creativity', particularly in the rhetoric surrounding the creative economy and other management-related sectors of the arts. It would seem that if you're not innovative, your creativity is not of much use. Drawing on the proliferation of new technologies available for artistic practices in the age of globalization, the editors of this volume call attention to the truism that, 'Market-driven phenomena may well be creating new figures of the symbol creator as a "motor of innovation" and altering the profile of the "creative subject".' And yet, there are some rash assumptions in assuming that innovation inevitably has to *follow* creativity, which would seem to deny the fact that all artistic practices are constantly in the process of innovating their rules and regulations. How else would they remain alive and capture attention through the dynamics of surprise? Perhaps one needs to accept that the valorization of 'innovation' in recent cultural theory has less to do with the inner mutations of artistic and cultural practice, and more to do with an extrinsic, self-conscious manipulation of particular practices in relation to both marketing demands and the

relentless search for curiosity and novelty in the public sphere.

From the encapsulation of the three principles – impermanence, ecology, and humility – which I have extrapolated from the *kalam*, problematizing their premises both within and against the capitalist logic of the creative economy, it could be argued that, despite all my qualifications, my position remains idealistic, if not utopian. As much as I have tried to argue against the reduction of the *kalam* to some esoteric folklore steeped in the rituals of the past, I realize that it is bound to seem somewhat quaint and economically counter-productive in relation to the glitz and financial power of, say, Bollywood and Twenty20 cricket, two of the most lucrative manifestations of the creative industries in the Indian context today. The latter refers to the new version of superfast cricket in 20 overs which has been blatantly constructed as spectacular entertainment, sponsored by liquor barons and some of Bollywood's biggest stars. Sold both as 'live performance' and prime-time TV, cricket has now been 're-invented' within a larger spectacle of fireworks, gymnastics, stunts, dance performances, and even imported cheer-leaders.

Keeping the sheer innovation of this hybrid Bollywood-cricket entertainment model in mind, one could be challenged into imagining more commercially lucrative avatars of the *kalam*. For instance, one could think of a 'designer-*kalam*', with all the computerized software and technology that India is now capable of displaying, with a virtuoso play of laser lights and digitalized sound effects. This innovation could look appropriately exotic, yet 'cool', in the precincts of a 5-star hotel lobby, exuding the aura of some New Age Orient. Needless to say, unlike its traditional counterpart, the 'erasure' of this 'designer-*kalam*' is not likely to be prioritized because the costs of production would be too extravagant to be wished away. Likewise, the expertise of traditional artisans is entirely expendable because this high-tech *kalam* would demand significantly different skills, if not a totally different conceptual orientation and aesthetics.

While my hypothesis of a designer-*kalam* may seem cynical, I should emphasize that I am not arguing against either commodification or innovation. In principle, it would be both counterproductive and unrealistic to imagine that so-called traditional cultural practices are incapable of transgressing their boundaries or that they are somehow ethically

and morally resistant to the global economy. This is clearly not the position voiced by many traditional artisans and performers who want to be part of a more established modern and global circuit.⁷ Drawing on the commercial success of Aboriginal dot-paintings reinvented through the introduction of acrylic paint, for instance, John Frow is clearly on target when he questions the pertinence of conservationist positions: 'Is the commodity form necessarily and always less humanly beneficial than non-commodified use values, and is its historical extension necessarily and under all circumstances a change for the worse?' (1997: 136). I would argue that any absolutist position in restricting the mobility and transformation of non-commercial traditional cultures into commodified forms needs to be opposed. At the same time I would qualify that there are certain contexts and particular circumstances in which the transition of these practices into the market economy cannot be readily assumed or endorsed.

Having acknowledged the ambivalence posed by the processes of commodification, let me provide a vibrant example of the 'invention of tradition' (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983) through *innovation*, which contributes enormously to the regional cultural economy of West Bengal in India. I have in mind the sculpturesque effigies (*murti*) of the goddess Durga in the public celebration of the *pujas* (religious worship) on the streets of Calcutta, which are now subject to all kinds of experiments and innovations in material and design (Bose, 1997; Guha-Thakurta, 2004). Earlier the effigies were made out of clay with a very precise traditional iconography mastered by the legendary artisans of Kumartuli, a cultural district in Calcutta where these artisans have lived for generations. Today, however, some of the younger artisans of this community have been exposed to modern notions of art education, and along with a growing number of self-perceived 'designers' who have graduated from the Government College of Art in Calcutta, have embarked on different experiments in re-inventing the goddess. Apart from clay, she can now be sculpted in terracotta and slate stone, and her styles of representation can be inspired by anything from Mughal miniatures and Madhubani painting to Kerala-inspired dance poses and Kalighat *pats* (folk paintings) (Guha-Thakurta, 2004: 34–56).

Even more 'innovative' are the *pandals* (pavilions) enclosing the goddess, some of which have

been made of sugar-cane and broken gramophone records, emulating all kinds of grand edifices from the Calcutta High Court to the famous Buddhist *stupa* of Sanchi (Guha-Thakurta, 2004: 35–6). These spectacular enclosures have acquired all the virtuosity and secular entertainment value of theme-parks, which form the primary motif around which Tapati Guha-Thakurta has envisioned the new manifestations of the *puja*. However, there is not one mega theme for the *pujas*, but multiple themes which are the brainwaves of *puja* committees, which form the nucleus of local neighbourhoods in and around Calcutta. Along with national issues like the communal genocide in Gujarat, or local events like the mauling of a drunk man by a tiger in the Calcutta zoo, the themes for the *pujas* draw on the most alluring global icons, including the *Titanic*, the Bamiyan Buddhas, Princess Diana, and even Harry Potter (whose visual representation within a Disneyland version of Hogwarts Castle in a *puja pandal* was subjected to a law suit by Warner Brothers because of an alleged breach of copyright).⁸ It becomes clear from such examples that the local imaginary is more than ready to absorb global resources, controversies, and stimuli. The question remains, as in the case of the Harry Potter episode, whether global corporations are as ready to support the localization of their brands with generosity and humour, instead of holding on to the mercenary and mean-spirited norms of 'intellectual property'.

Despite the re-invention of the spectacle of the *pujas*, whose secularization has been intensified through local corporate support and the shopping frenzy that enormously boosts the sales of clothing, food, sweets, gift items, cosmetics, and electronics (Ghosh, 2006), what needs to be kept in mind is that the goddess Durga continues to be ritually immersed at the end of the *pujas*, not unlike the *kalam* which is erased. This continued adherence to ritual practice whereby the goddess is returned to her heavenly abode needs to be kept in mind in order to work against the somewhat too unproblematic transformation of the *puja* into secular festivity and the equation of the *pandals* with heterotopias, divested of religious or spiritual dimensions.⁹

At a museological level as well, which is yet another form of secularization along with the market forces, one should keep in mind that only a few established artists in Bengal have succeeded in

museumizing the goddess in a permanent abode, though this practice is more evident abroad than in India itself (Guha-Thakurta, 2007). Ironically, the zeal in authenticating the 'purity' of the Durga image is more likely to be found outside India rather than in Bengal itself. The agencies of authentication abroad would include NRBs (Non-Resident Bengalis), whose diasporic zeal in holding on to rituals of their childhood, imagined or real, contributes to the perpetuation of traditional iconography in a nostalgic mode. A more self-conscious mode of authentication, however, has been perpetuated by coteries of Euro-American curators, whose affirmation of religiosity in the secular space of established museums has been legitimized as a means of countering the colonial episteme of museology. New modes of recontextualizing non-Western religious and cultural artifacts are now offered as alternative modes of worship in the museum space.¹⁰

While acknowledging these innovations in what could be called the 'god industry', I would caution against the valorization of *all* tradition-inspired innovations as 'creative' in opposition to those traditional practices which may not be consciously innovative at all. Indeed, the absence of innovation does not imply that traditions are necessarily fossilized because they can continue to grow *within* deeply internalized rules and regulations, not unlike the *kalam* which continues to be improvized within set patterns. Indeed, there is a danger in capitalizing on innovation through its compatibility with the larger global cultural discourse relating to hybridity, pastiche, kitsch, and public culture. The fact that a traditional cultural practice on the lines of the *kalam* may *not* necessarily imbibe the global through innovations, either in terms of its marketing or re-invented aesthetics, should not be seen as an anachronistic aberration. Rather, I would like to highlight both the flexibility and adaptability of local cultural practices as well as their intransigence and resistance to glib translation. Even as I would leave open the possibilities of their collaboration with national and global agencies, I would also value their right to negotiate creativity on their own terms within their own contexts.

Rethinking cultural policy through creativity

Drawing some broader lessons from the *kalam* in relation to the increasingly vexed and bureaucratized

field of policy making, I would urge a greater sensitization towards the visceral, sensuous and spiritual dimensions of creativity. Let us acknowledge that these dimensions cannot be measured in purely economic terms, which doesn't mean that the absence of distinct standards of measurement should be regarded as the *sine qua non* of authentic creativity. On the contrary, it would be disingenuous to deny that the most market-driven cultural phenomena like blockbuster movies or Broadway musicals can be creative in their own right. The point is that not every manifestation of creativity can be placed on the same scale and measured according to fixed criteria. The economic dimension is just one among many other criteria of value, which may be elusive, if not unquantifiable.

Nor would I favour an instrumentalist approach towards creativity along the lines of the British creative industries policy of the late 1990s, for the simple reason that there can be no causal relationship made between the experience (and cultural value) of watching a play or listening to music with the social imperatives to remove crime or drug abuse or unemployment. There are very subtle institutional and political mediations that need to be explored between art practice and the possibilities of social transformation, which need to be implemented at concrete levels.

Furthermore, if we are concerned about social transformation outside the narrow matrix of 'problem solving', then we cannot simply relegate the transformative process to something outside ourselves, to those sectors of society which have been categorized as 'undeveloped' or 'marginal'. Rather, the process of transformation has to begin with ourselves through the embodiment of creative energy and the sharing of its processual dynamics through actual acts of social bonding and dialogue. These human interactions are more likely to provide a ground for change in perception and consciousness than the mere articulation of blueprints of 'creative cities'. Recommendations for 'inter-sectoral' collaborations across new systems of 'governance' (Pratt, 2007) would also appear to privilege the already empowered role of policy makers at the expense of benefiting artists and the public more directly.

For policy to be shaped in a more grounded and comprehensive way, yet another consideration needs to be a far greater openness to those locations and sectors of the world's population which do

not necessarily embrace the cultural values of the metropolitan global cosmopolis. Creativity, in short, is not the prerogative of the city alone, even though it is within this valorized site that 'creative industries' have been expected to thrive within highly funded infrastructures of technology, communications and global serving agencies. Instead of privileging these already media-saturated and overly funded sites, far more attention needs to be given to the regional and rural sectors of any cultural economy, not just in the cultures of the 'South' but also in the marginalized regions of 'developed' nations as well.¹¹

Finally, it would be useful if 'creative economists' could acknowledge the numerous local and communitarian economies prevailing in the cultures of the 'South', but also to be found in the non-commercial and non-profit alternative sectors of the 'North' where there are diverse resistances towards monopolistic markets as, for instance, in the recent upsurge of community-related cultural activities and the ubiquitous phenomenon of farmers' markets. Thriving bazaars in Indian cities along with markets of epic proportions in sites like the *mela* (fair) – not just linked to pilgrimages but also to cultural forums representing handicrafts and books – are not exclusively dependent on either the agencies of the state or the market. These local, event-related markets constitute a massive informal economy, which has sustained artists, artisans, and street vendors over the years. Consolidated by communities with a loose network of local organizations, this economy demonstrates a highly interactive mode of independent self-sufficiencies, which is probably one of the closest economic equivalents to what Mahatma Gandhi recognized as *swaraj* ('self-rule').

While it could be argued that a vast body of creative practices in the 'South' are no longer as resilient as the *kalam* – and therefore, a policy for their preservation and the income generation of their custodians becomes mandatory – it is necessary to remember, at the risk of reiterating a massively ignored truism, that the articulation of such a policy should come from the communities themselves. However, in the top-down expertise that marks the rhetoric and legislation of such policies, the considerations of people are invariably erased. This erasure is ruthless compared to that of the *kalam*, which works through cultural consensus and the beauty of a dissolving form. In our search

for more context-sensitive policies, therefore, let us remember the *kalam* in its celebration of the immediacies of the Now, constantly dying and ceaselessly renewed, within an endless cycle of creativity.

Notes

1. The categories of 'skill' and 'talent' were specifically linked to 'individual creativity' in the Creative Industries Task Force Mapping Document published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in the UK in 1998. Without being defined or discriminated, these creative faculties were identified as contributing towards 'the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'.
2. One of the most thorough and politically inflected critiques of the 'creative industries' discourse has been provided by Nicholas Garnham (2000, 2005), who points out how its 'ideological power' is directly related to its absence of critical reflexivity. Garnham locates this power in the decisive shift from the state to the market under the Thatcher government, which was further 'accelerated' by Tony Blair's New Labour policies. Under the sign of Cool Britannia, 'creativity' as opposed to 'culture' was prioritized with specific reference to 'the information society', ostensibly benefiting all citizens through its focus on 'access', 'excellence', 'education', and 'economic value.'
3. The ubiquity of 'creativity' under the auspices of New Labour's cultural policy making has received a series of responses from Angela McRobbie (2002, 2004, 2007), with particular reference to youth culture and the fashion industry in Britain. Moving beyond the 'mantra of losses' lamented by the 'Old Left' in terms of declining trade unionism and the cult of apolitical individualism, McRobbie links the 'enforced entrepreneurialism' of the creative industries to 'extraordinary degrees of self-exploitation' in highly 'de-regulated' and 'unprotected' conditions of work. Even while engaging with the possibilities of 'new productive singularities', as posited by Hardt and Negri (2000), the evidence provided by McRobbie would seem to suggest that the cult of creativity has resulted in an intensification of atomism subsumed within the masquerades of pleasure and desire.
4. In addition to the Mannaan community, other ritual practitioners of the *kalam* in Kerala include the Velan, the Malaya, and the Perumannaan, who are all from low-caste communities. In most rituals, the *kalam* is erased by the oracle, who mediates between the actual performance of the *kalam* and the invocation of the goddess. However, in the case of the *pampin kalam*, associated with the serpent worship of the Pulluvan community, two young girls are made to sit on the drawing of the holy serpents whereupon they become 'possessed' and begin to voice oracular predictions. In this state, the girls drag their bodies and roll over the *kalam*, erasing it in the

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process. For a description of one particular *kalam* performance, including all its intermediary stages but with a perfunctory reference to its erasure, read Zarrilli (1990). I am extremely grateful to Sri L.S. Rajagopalan and Purushothaman Avaroth for their considerable inputs on the ritual context of the *kalam*.

5. The categories of the 'Now' and the 'Not Yet' are borrowed from Chakarabarty (2000), who uses them to situate different moments of time in colonial historiography and global modernity. While the 'Not Yet' is symptomatic of those colonial states which have yet to enter the trajectory of world history in terms of democracy or modernity, the 'Now' is more linked to the immediacies of political or revolutionary struggle.
 6. Significantly, 'sacrifice' can be also rendered in an economic context, as, for instance, when Arjun Appadurai (1986: 3–4) interprets George Simmel's (1978) understanding of economic value in terms of an 'exchange of sacrifices': 'one's desire for an object is fulfilled by the sacrifice of some other object, which is the focus of the desire of another'. Needless to say, this is an anti-metaphysical reading of sacrifice.
 7. In her brief perspective on 'Globalization and Crafts in South Asia' (Dhamija, 2008), the author calls attention to an ironic moment in a conference celebrating fifty years of handicrafts development in India, where a traditional designer specializing in jacquard making in Varanasi countered the notion that globalization was having a negative impact on the crafts sector. On the contrary, as the designer argued, 'It is our fault that Varanasi is in difficulties. It is because we have not globalized'. While the actual negotiation of a level-playing field between indigenous craftsmen and globalizing agencies raises a number of logistical challenges, which Dhamija does not address, the point is that globalization is not rejected outright as a source of exploiting the crafts sector. The more critical question concerns the role of the national government in 'protecting' the crafts industry from unfair competition and the export of essential raw materials. When does protectionism cease to be economically and creatively productive?
 8. In October 2007, in the thick of the Durga *puja* celebrations in Calcutta, the *puja* committee of Salt Lake's FD Block was charged with copyright violations for its use of Harry Potter memorabilia, including the magic broom, the Hogwarts Express Train, and hanging magic candles. For the *pujas* in previous years, the *pandal* (pavilion) of this particular committee had recreated Swami Vivekananda's residence and a model of the *Titanic*.
- In 2007, Harry Potter was selected by the popular demand of the children living in the neighbourhood. Totally non-commercial in its priorities, the *puja* committee was relieved when Delhi's High Court gave permission for Harry Potter to be celebrated under its auspices, ostensibly with the goddess Durga's blessings. However, the judge also qualified that any public display of Harry Potter after the *pujas* would require the prior permission of J.K. Rowling.
9. While both Guha-Thakurta (2004) and Bose (1997) are correct in foregrounding the secularization of the *pujas*, their readings need to be complicated through an acknowledgement of the religious residues underlying the altered forms of the goddess. In the absence of any oral history or multiple modes of perception, the 'theme-park' rendering of the *pujas* is privileged somewhat too literally in a predominantly descriptive mode. At a more complex hermeneutic level, Bose's attempt to read the multiple abodes of the goddess within Foucault's construct of 'heterotopia' fails to engage with the dissonance and subversive possibilities of such sites. The predominantly magical, fabulous, and illusory spectacles of the *puja* would seem to lend themselves more to simulacra rather than to heterotopias – a distinction that needs to be problematized.
 10. While Guha-Thakurta (2007) focuses deftly on the dichotomy of 'our gods' and 'their museums' to highlight some of the challenges of transporting ancient Indian religious sculptures and icons to festivals and exhibitions abroad, there are emergent modes of religiosity-driven museumization in India itself, which are responses to a wide range of movements including Hindutva (the ideology of the Hindu Right), the assertion of Buddhism for *dalit* (low-caste) politics, and the militant history of religious Sikh leaders. See Mathur and Singh (2007) for a representation of these emergent museums.
 11. Stuart Cunningham emphasizes this precise point in the Australian context when he argues against 'the further consolidation of cultural industries in one or two spatial hotspots in the country – Sydney and Melbourne' (2001: 30), as opposed to the redistribution of cultural resources at a regional level. While he equates the marginalization of 'regionalism' with the 'class-based dispositions of cultural capital', it is unclear whether his understanding of the 'region' would include rural sectors, which tend to be totally obliterated in almost any analysis of the cultural or creative industries.

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