

What does the legacy of Tyagaraja have to do with the musical genius of T M Krishna?

Or

Where would Britney Spears be without the Beatles, and do they therefore deserve some of her royalties?

FRIDAY REVIEW + MUSIC

CHENNAI, June 25, 2014

Updated: June 25, 2014 10:44 IST

Copyright shocker on Tyagaraja kritis

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A portrait of saint Tyagaraja.

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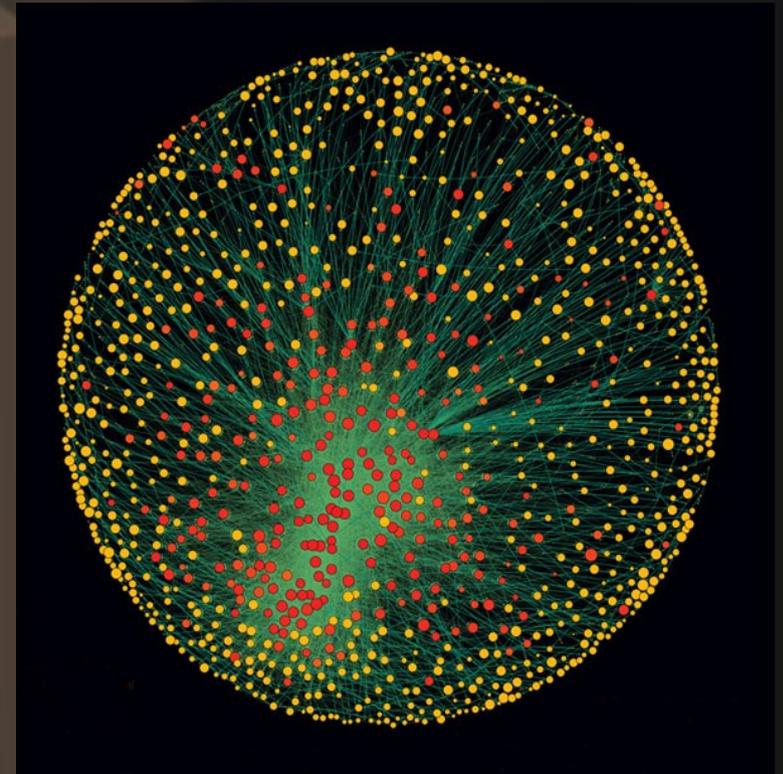
Notices issued to video channels on YouTube for uploading Carnatic music rendition of compositions of saint Tyagaraja

A spate of copyright-violation notices issued to video channels on YouTube for uploading Carnatic music rendition of compositions of saint Tyagaraja, has raised the hackles of musicians and fans of the art form.

An online petition has now been launched asking YouTube to initiate a

The changing nature of capitalism

- The **network** of global corporate control is a small consortium of corporations – mainly banks – who run the world...a mere 147 corporations form this “super entity” of tightly knit companies.
- All of their ownership is held by other members of the super-entity that controls 40% of the world’s wealth; which is the real economy.



• ***The Digital Divide Will End in 11 Years***

– and Will Be Our Ruination

- *The Internet will be used as the most effective force of mind control the planet has ever seen, leaving the Madison Avenue revolution as a piddling, small thing by comparison*

- Mikey O'Connor, used to be associated with ICANN's GNSO, works now on land use issues created by industrial sand mining in Wisconsin

Some key ideas – The Digital Commons

- Understanding economic production today, lies with the commons
- Capitalism needs the commons and consequently a range of systems to regulate and enclose its products.
- While enclosures operated over land, today they operate over human civilization (culture and knowledge)
- Neo-liberal enterprise deploys the material substrate of the digital commons – converging upon natural resources and the productive capacities of societies
- Contemporary capitalism privileges a small global elite.. vast regions, and peoples are colonised for its reproduction – those who are left behind are at risk of redundancy, except as commodities of the market

The Digital Commons

- Broadly includes – **physical layer** - spectrum, cables, wires and fibre, **logical layer** of software applications and technical protocols and **content layer** of information, knowledge, expression and culture
- A new paradigm for the production and dissemination of cultural works and knowledge
 - Leveraging communication technologies
 - Entails peer production/ non-hierarchical cooperation
 - Non-rivalrous circulation of immaterial content online

The Digital Commons

- Virtual as conflictive terrain
 - History of the commons – expansion of the market sphere, and private control over goods hitherto subject to common rules
 - Expansion of the digital commons – the very nature of information – **reproducible *ad infinitum* at a marginal cost** - “inalienable public good” ? eg. The Internet itself
 - **A new mode of capitalism that seeks valorisation for owners of network infrastructure, online platforms and digital content**
 - **The commodification, degradation and enclosure of the digital commons**

The Digital Commons

– exploitation through “openness”

- DRM systems – locks inside a shared resource (gadgets or software); Key to deencryption is for user to be tied to producer - (from GMOs to GURTs)
- **The rise of forces which both ‘enable’ and exploit the participatory networks arising in the peer to peer era.**
 - Red Hat: makes a living through associated services around open source and free software which it doesn’t own, and doesn’t need to own. The spectacle of firms divesting their intellectual capital, witness the recent gift of IBM of many patents to the open source ‘patents commons’
 - Amazon's force comes from being the intermediary between the publishers and the consumers of books. But crucially, it success comes from enabling knowledge exchange between these customers

The Digital Commons

– exploitation through “openness”

- Google :owns search algorithms and the vast machinery of distributed computers. BUT, just as crucially, its value lies in the vast content created by users on the Internet. Without it, Google would be nothing substantial. And the ranking algorithm is crucially dependent on the ‘collective wisdom’ of internet users..
today google gives you what it thinks you want
- EBay: it sells nothing, it just enables, and exploits, the myriad interactions between users creating markets.
- Skype mobilizes the processing resources of the computers of its participating clients

Welcome - the new intermediary

- ‘Autonomy within the market’, that allows for various forms of ‘consumer aggregation’ that were hitherto difficult to achieve.
- ‘Netarchical’ leaders are vocal in their general support for participation. ***Free expression is big business.*** But they are dangerous trustees of commons-favorable protocols.
- ***The new capitalist class does not have to worry about capital – by owning the platforms, they just extract rent out of the collaborative labour of the universe, using open spaces for private gain***

Today we are witnessing the reconfiguration of pre-capitalist forms of social coordination in the computational-informational space. This includes a range of non-market and non-proprietary activities such as open source software and open standards, peer-to-peer economies, and distributed forms of production over networks. As the informational network migrates from a traditional desktop model, becoming invested in everyday spaces through mobile and pervasive platforms, such activities are thought to be capable of inflecting not only social and juridical processes, but material economies. This ideology of the digital commons has many advocates in both the communities of digital activism and the core apparatuses of neoliberal power.

Rachel O Dwyer

What we are seeing in the network economy

- Re-emergence of rent / blurring of boundaries between rent and profit; the crisis of law of value in the 'communism of capital' (Carlo Vercellone)
 - Value and labour time connection unhinged in the cooperation of labour
 - Rent/ profit unhinged from positive functions of production/ wealth generation true for industrial capitalism..
 - Rent not only as expropriation but also the becoming of contemporary capitalism
 - **rent not only a mode of collecting wealth generated by labour, but a mechanism of de-socialisation of the commons and of political, spatial and socio-economic segmentations of labour power**

Cognitive capitalism theorists believe that capitalism is centered around the accumulation of immaterial assets, especially related to the information core of products, which are protected through Intellectual Property Rights, i.e. legal means such as patents. These patents, as they are used by brands, in sectors such as pharma, agribusiness and software (Microsoft), then allow for the creation of a surplus value resulting from monopolistic rents. The contradiction of cognitive capitalism is that the products themselves are generally cheap to produce, so they have to be kept in a state of artificial scarcity through IP protection. Cognitive capitalism is associated with the process of a private appropriation of the Information Commons.

What we are seeing in the network economy

- Colonisation of knowledge and life through IPR; artificial construction of scarcity to extract rent – spectrum is one example
- Command over production substituted by command over markets - thru monopolies and capital's location as an intermediary between markets and labour – Monsanto take over of Climate Corp; FB is buying Titan Aerospace
- Financial architectures more important than the organisation of production
- Autonomisation of labour (the intellectual elite and the rest) and destabilisation of institutions of welfare

In the era of networks, control over network architecture recarves the architecture of value – privileging some geographies, autonomising labour, making the small perpetually vulnerable.... (“irrelevance” - in network capitalism)

Why does all this matter to feminism?

- Network capitalism as the final frontier of the commodification of life and of the valorization of the masculine dream of the unencumbered individual
 - Reward of enterprise over labour
- The very architecture of “market as society”
 - Return of Empire – BoP modelling of micro-finance built on women's backs and lives – expropriation of collectivities; formal subsumption of women's labour into the logic of capitalism
 - National data regimes as state impunity – eg. Information utilities will access data and sell it back to the government departments.

Feminist Issues

- Where are women in the immaterial commons? - The unvalued and invisible and reassertion of systems of bondage
- How do we re-conceptualise theories of body as site of expropriation? (How do we understand autonomy and agency?)
- Sharing and collaboration – no virtues in and of themselves; so what is real sharing? cooperation, solidarity, democratic governance – how is it linked to justice?

How do we recover alternative forms of production – gift economy, different conceptions of the lifeworld?

- eg. Mobiles for empowerment – assimilation or emancipation?

Feminist Issues

- Local knowledge and alternatives to copyright – Creative Commons regimes mirror mainstream copyright culture in ignoring traditional knowledge – which has contingent uses and situated meanings
- In the fusion of lifeworld and market – what limits do we encounter in economics as a discipline?

Commons and commoning

- a community informatics framework

- Internet as social environment, a community space – with the expectation that principles of equity, fairness and justice will prevail
-the primary purpose of the Internet is not to mine data and make knowledge a commodity for purchase and sale but rather to advance community goals equally and fairly within these distributed infrastructures
- Aspire to an Internet effectively owned and controlled by the communities that use it and to Internet ownership that evolves through communities federated regionally, nationally and globally. The Internet's role as a community asset, a public good and a local community utility is more important than its role as a site for profit-making or as a global artifact.

Global multilateral and national frameworks

- Net neutrality, end to end principle need to be protected
- Public policies for competition; data portability, interoperability
- Promoting the public domain of resources and their usages – free software, wikipedia
- Limitations and exceptions to copyrights
- Community self-organisation (community run networks), voluntarism and trusteeship; new cooperatives

The conflict of ideas then....

So whatever do the Beatles have to do with Britney Spears? And even if they do, so what (as long as I get the royalties)?



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Can our histories of work and labour, life and leisure encompass a sociality that is above and beyond 'value', as economics would have us believe?

Liquid democracy or fluid capital?

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THANK YOU!