

### **The Strategy associated with the hegemony of the New Right**

What does Kaushik Sunder Rajan learn as he investigates in Hyderabad and Mumbai, In Silicon Valley, and in the company GeneEd about the relationship between science and capitalism, and between nationalism and globalisation? Briefly describe his investigations in each of these locations and summarize what he learns about these relationships in each instance

What does Tiziana Terranova explore in her chapter on 'Free Labour'? Briefly explain how she shows us exploitation is still at work in this new world of information? What does she mean by 'the biological turn' in the chapter of the 'Soft Control'? Briefly explain.

Both Rajan and Terranova are concerned with society being subjected to a biological strategy. How do they see the relationship between this strategy and work and profit? How do their books reinforce each other and help us to understand this moment in capitalism? How, if at all, do they differ in their analysis of this moment?

1- Network Culture by Tiziana Terranova

2- Biocapital by Kaushik Sunder Rajan

3- <http://www.theclassofthenew.net> by Richard Barbrook

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Introduction:

Strategy, tactics and logistics (resources) work together in any business enterprise to make it successful in the first place. Now we are concerned with the globalisation (global-local) (Globalisation 2006; Think Globally, Act Locally 2006) process in the international integration of free markets, and this is a new scenario for the New Right to strive for its hegemony in the worldwide arena centred on the United States as the dominant nation-state. But this hegemony can be overtaken by the European Union or the Asian nations as integrated economic blocks on their own grounds.

The new economy will rely on biotechnology and high technology as its foundation. The books *Network Culture* and *Biocapital*, as well as the book *The Class of the New* by Richard Barbrook, deal with the new trends in these technoscientific fields and their implication for a new order in the emergent Knowledge Society.

In this essay, we discuss and critically review two books that seem to have much in common in showing the trends of a global culture whilst at the same time unraveling the factors that seem to contribute to changes in political economy from a Universalist worldview.

We analyse these books and their ideas in some detail. At the end of the road, we can be optimistic about the future of Humankind. This conclusion is possible due to the Universalist teleology that can be found beneath the surface of these books, including also the book *The Class of the New* by Richard Barbrook, the Universalist theological teachings of John Scottus Eriugena (810-877) and the Universalist position of Adolph E. Knoch (1874-1965). This insight into the future can be applied to the business world taking into account the implications of all the sources under study in this essay.

#### 1.- Science and Capitalism: Biotechnology and High Technology.

*Biocapital*, by Kaushik Sunder Rajan, is a theoretical contribution to political economy grounded in genomic research and drug development procedures. *Biocapital* sets out a socio-theoretical and

cultural debate on the nature of values, knowledge, belief systems across nations and religions within the context of productive enterprises and marketing forces. Biocapital puts forth a social and theoretical debate on the nature and production of values, knowledge, belief systems, and brings out the attributes of religion and nation with regard to productive enterprises. The conceptual debates of cultural anthropology identified by Rajan set out methodological questions on comparative ethnography, value generation and knowledge production in a globalised world.

Biocapital is a new theoretical dimension added to political economy grounded in genomic research and drug development procedures. Rajan shows that biotechnologies are related to economic markets in which they emerge. In the book, Rajan deals with integration of several issues including the global flow of ideas, information, capital and people in the biotech industry.

Rajan's research was conducted for five years and brings out the relationship between market forces and biotechnology projects and the phenomenon of technoscientific capitalism. Several issues discussed here deals with notions of biopolitics, and how life sciences and biotechnology has economic and epistemic value within a global context. Rajan's approach to integration of biotechnology and financial markets showing the role of policymakers and capitalists brings forth the central position of a global economy and capitalist markets.

The case study in Mumbai concentrated on the Wellspring Hospital facility, which specialises in providing clinical trials for pharmaceutical companies. The state-of-the-art hospital is not designed to treat patients, but to provide subjects on which new pharmaceuticals can be tested. Rajan notes that this facility has been located in poor area, whilst most new private hospitals designed to treat patients are located in wealthy areas. Rajan suggests this is no co-incidence, that the facility was deliberately situated so that it could take advantage of the large unemployed population of ex textile workers, as cheap recruits to its medical testing.

The facility is designed to provide clinical trials not only for Indian companies but also for the international market, as emphasised by the Genomed board member, who admitted that one of the advantages of the facility was that it could offer a broad cross section of the world's populations. This must raise ethical issues, over whether it is right that pharmaceutical companies should test drugs which are being primarily developed for rich western markets to be tested on poor people in developing countries. Hence the development of a global pharmaceutical industry creates a difficult ethical dilemma. It is in the interests of the industry to conduct clinical trials in the lowest cost, least regulated location, but this may lead to the exploitation of vulnerable populations, whose poverty makes them willing to participate in trials.

There is a clear relationship between science and capitalism in the context of the Biocapital based on the business dealings of biotechnology and high technology businesses interactions. This relationship brings about serious ethical issues about genetic manipulation and population reduction in which an biocapitalist elite decides who lives and who dies.

## 2.- Nationalism and Glocalisation: The New Transnational Society.

Rajan considers the central theme of biocapital as that 'which asks questions of the implications for life sciences when performed in corporations, and for capitalism, when biotechnology becomes a key source of market value' (p.1). Rajan follows the methodology of multi-sited ethnography. Rajan studied 'the responses of academic and industrial scientists, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and policy makers - in two distinct national environments, the United States and India, as they shape and come to terms with these emergent technologies and emergent political economies'. The technological and political economies of the two countries being distinctly different, Rajan especially highlights not just the nationalistic cultures and politics as well as marketing environments of these different countries but also shows how these economies shape the scientific industries in these cultures.

Considering the relationship between biotechnological innovation, development and marketing and the role of market forces and corporate economy, Rajan work is focused on 'tracking and theorizing the co-

production of an emergent technoscientific regime - that of biotechnology in the context of drug development - with an emergent political economic regime that sees the increased prevalence of such research in corporate locales, with corporate agendas and practices’.

This suggests that Rajan’s work is mainly based on unraveling the underlying politics and culture of market forces and their relationships with biotechnological processes and systems. Terranova also unravels the underlying politics of communication and information transmission and the relationship between media and global culture. Both books show the significance of political motives in channeling a global culture using the economic processes as central to the social change that they bring about.

Even though for India there is a nationalist position at stake and for the United States there is a salvationist or messianic component in its globalisation efforts, it is clear that this integration process means different things to different nations and cultures. In business terms, a new strategy has to be unfolded in order to conciliate nationalism and globalisation endeavors.

### 3.- Free Labour, Exploitation, and Collaboration.

Tiziana Terranova concept of free labour relates to the contribution made by unpaid volunteers or amateurs to the internet economy. The internet has been formed by a diverse group of organisations and

individuals, which has included public sector, corporations and voluntary contributions from private individuals. The contribution by 'free labour' can take many forms, whether it is the creation of content or the modification of software. Whilst much the time, the activities of free labour is independent of corporate activity on the net, some companies have succeeded in harnessing this unpaid labour for their own purposes. AOL attracted over 30,000 volunteers as community leaders and helped AOL generate \$7m a year in profits. Netscape and other providers of open source software provided free access to their software and encouraged community of open source software programmers to use their labour to modify and generate applications. The companies themselves were not of course entirely altruistic in their behaviour. The companies sought to benefit from the adoption of open-source programs by providing technical support, packaging regular upgrades, etc. Terranova seems to question the morality of the exploitation of free labour by companies and venture capitalists. The companies attempt to tailor the internet to their own purposes, enabling them to benefit financially from the labours of others.

A number of online practices has been taken up and discussed by Terranova who also brings out the contemporary forms of political engagement through a digital culture taking into consideration the Marxist concept of Intellectual Capital and immaterial labour. The internet has an open architecture and the emphasis is on communication protocols and challenges identified by movements

against global capital and war. With the advent of World Wide Web, online practices seem to have changed over the past years especially in terms of community formation and global opinions within networking cultures.

Terranova's work is however focused on the concept of free labour and highlights the concept of anarcho communism and net related unpaid labour outside wage relations. According to Terranova, free labour is 'a desire of labour immanent to late capitalism' (p.94). She also claims that anti capitalist potentialities and movements should be examined with a certain amount of scepticism. Terranova also discusses different aspects of soft control that turns labour potentialities to capital continued reproduction. Relating her discussion to free labour, Network Culture also explores the virtual movements of the 21st century highlighting the role of cyber-organisations as central to any movement, control or even labour issues. Terranova seems to go beyond the concept of immaterial labour and suggests that the work of writing, reading, participating in chats and discussion forums generally could not be counted within abstract labour and also suggests that a multitude is not rooted in class formation although she does not seem to deny the existence of the stratification of class and identity (p.130).

Network culture emphasizes that changes within information transmission and communications methods will not need a strategy according to a predefined pathway as laid out by specialists or theorists.

Although strategy has been defined as a collective attempt in developing a sense of direction in whatever is done. Network culture brings out the dynamics of power relations as well as opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses in online networks.

Network culture provides a theoretical platform and uses insights from physics, biology, computing, cybernetics and philosophy to show the relations of power governing information technology and practices used within the internet systems. Terranova brings out the processes and non linear sequence of events to show the importance of cultural moments within network culture. In defining and describing network culture, Terranova suggests that the book is “an attempt to give a name to, and to further our understanding of, a global culture as it unfolds across a multiplicity of communication channels but within a single milieu” (p. 1).

The discussion here is related to Free Labour and Soft Control, although chapter wise the discussion are geared to analysis of information theory, structural evolution of the internet, the role of the knowledge worker and free labour in the digital economy, as well as theoretical underpinnings such as evolution of biological computation, emergent intelligence and self controlling systems such as cellular automata. The relationship between intensification communication and emergence of masses referred to as social entropy would be able to decipher the role of information and communication within the new

emergent and turbulent organisations. Terranova also analyses the different aspects of digital economy and suggests that free labour is not completely restricted to digital economy and is an advanced source of value in capitalist societies. The meaning of the word 'free' has been dealt with both in the context of the digital economy and cultural economy.

The concept of free labour seems to be intricately connected to the working model of capitalist production. Thus even within the culture of digital economy and free labour, exploitation is still at work at various levels and could be explained considering the different aspects of politics and culture within the new economy. Terranova writes , 'Free labour is the moment where this knowledgeable consumption of culture is translated into excess productive activities that are pleurably embraced and at the same time often shamelessly exploited . . . These types of cultural and technical labour (web design, multimedia production, digital services, chat, real-life stories, mailing lists, amateur newsletters) are not produced by capitalism in any direct, cause-and-effect fashion, that is they have not developed simply as an answer to the economic needs of capitalism. However, they have developed in relation to the expansion of the cultural industries and they are part of a process of economic experimentation with the creation of monetary value out of knowledge/culture/affect . . .'

Terranova further writes on Free Labour that “Free labour is a desire of labour immanent to late capitalism, and late capitalism is the field which both sustains free labour and exhausts it. It exhausts it by undermining the means through which that labour can sustain itself: from the burn-out syndromes of Internet start-ups to under-compensation and exploitation in the cultural economy at large.”

#### 4.- Soft control, Biological Turn and the New Scientific Paradigm.

Terranova’s study is related to the politics of the digital culture and shows the various social and cultural dimensions of networking and communication across cultures and beyond geographical limitations. The politics of the emerging digital culture as emphasised in Terranova’s analysis bring out the social, cultural and political dimensions of networking technologies. Terranova focuses on the debates in cultural theory and politics, and discusses concepts on cyberorganising and brings out political and social issues related to contemporary topics of biological computation, turbulent media culture, free labour and an emergent global economy. The new forms of communication have been highlighted and Terranova examines how communication has helped to transform identity, politics, democracy and the structure and functions of organisation. The book highlights online debates and discussions on several contemporary issues and focuses on the control policies and

power in societies and the political opinions that seem to be framed by digital cultures and societies.

The book on Network Culture tends to focus on the dynamics between internet culture and contemporary theoretical epistemologies about the organizations of the future. In fact, Terranova highlights the conflicts of interest that are seen in networking cultures. Terranova provides different critical perspectives and original arguments on various dimensions of politics, sociology and cultural anthropology within the context of internet culture and global organisations according to the biological computation model as explained by John von Neumann's Cellular Automata System. It can also be explained away to the new trends in Physics regarding the String or Super String Theory. (Schwarz 2003).

##### 5.- Biological Strategy, Work, and Profit.

Both Rajan and Terranova would agree that changes in technology are having a great impact on society. Rajan emphasis is on how the impact of 'biocapital' on society and how different cultures are effected by it. Rajan looks at attempts to transplant Silicon Valley's entrepreneurial culture into India by the Indian ex pat community and politicians through a top down approach. Rajan sees the contradiction in these policies which essentially uses state intervention in subsidising facilities to encourage an entrepreneurship within Indian biotech. Terranova

would also see this contradiction with her belief in the 'biological turn', which could be used to describe the complex interplay of factors, which create the entrepreneurial culture in the Silicon Valley. Where Rajan might believe the difficulty in transferring this entrepreneurial culture to India reflects fundamental differences between the cultures of the two regions. Terranova's book would suggest that the problem with such a top down approach is that it ignores the biological nature of such scientific and technological hubs, which is not governed by a guiding hand, but by the interaction of a multitude of different entities. The lack of a single control system and complexity of such a system would make such an intervention all but impossible.

#### 6.- The New Emergent and Turbulent Business World.

Both Terranova and Rajan provide theoretical insights and make substantial contribution to political economy. Whereas Terranova deals with the use of information and communication in a global economy through digital media, Rajan shows the contribution of global economy and financial markets in bringing out the changes within the biotechnology industry. Rajan proposes an integration of biotechnological procedures with the approaches of financial markets whereas Terranova focused on the integration of communication and information systems with the digital media to affect the global economy. Both authors bring out the political frameworks of the global economy as related to web

media communications or biotechnological innovations and both authors use theoretical perspectives to highlight their individual cases and unique insights.

Rajan discusses values and belief systems to focus on ethnographical changes and issues and uses the concept of technoscientific capitalism. Terranova also focuses on cultural dimensions and politics of communication as the underlying factors for social change. Both authors use wide range of social and political dimensions in explaining their viewpoints and whereas Rajan's analysis brings out the relationship between capitalism, globalisation, science and nationalism, Terranova focuses on capital and global economy and its relationship with web media, politics and information technology. Both books seem to reinforce each other and show how strategy and politics are set up at the centre of profits and economic pursuits. Both Rajan and Terranova highlight the economic impact of information/communication or biotechnological innovation and offer substantial analysis of the role of capitalist economies, market forces and politics in global culture of networking or technological marketing.

#### 7.- The Future According to Universalism.

Biological computation, Cellular Automata Systems, emergent economies, and soft control imply an epistemic framework that can be confirmed through a universalist teleology like that of A. E. Knoch,

translator of the Concordant Bible (Concordant Publishing Concern 2005). Knoch states the following about Universal Reconciliation:

“It is usual to view this subject from the depths of the sinner's doom. But let us rather view it from the heights of God's glory, and rejoice that He who was made sin for us, will yet, by the power of His cross, undo all the Devil has done, and sweep every sign of sin from Gods universe. (...) Picture to yourself a perfect universe! Not a trace of sin or of transgression to eclipse the effulgence of God's love! Not an impulse of His affection but receives an instant and thrilling response from every heart. What a marvelous harvest of redemption that will be! How potent the cross through which it comes! How glorious the God who purposed and perfected such a reconciliation!” (Knoch 2006).

As can be inferred by reading Richard Barbrook's book alongside the works of Knoch, there will be one coin, one world ruler, one glocal (globa-local) economy. This Unitarian system will be integrated as a real unity (see I Corinthians 15:20-28). Universalism is not a new trend. It has been around for a long time in the works of John Scottus Eriugena (Moran 2004) and Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia (Hursthouse 2003).

## Conclusion

It is relevant to take a look at the universal implications of control and the ethical issues that arise from the wrongful use of biotechnology and high technologies. The biological computation model (Cellular Automata System) is a universalist model that can bring a new meaning to economic endeavors in an emergent new global economic order.

The class of the new according to Richard Barbrook is the one “making new things in new ways with new technologies” as “the only prerequisite for membership of the class of the new”. (p. 31). In this line of thinking Barbrook concludes his essay stating that “when everyone can participate within the General Intellect, creativity will no longer be a privilege. The class of the new will then be superseded by th civilization of humanity.” (p. 48). The future is bright according to any of the secular or theological points of view.

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