
Editorial: Flows, Autonomy and Rights

Guido Ruivenkamp & Joost Jongerden

Hereby you receive Vol. 3 Issue 2 of Tailoring Biotechnologies. When the journal started (as successor to the Biotechnology and Development Monitor), we promised to become a forum for critical analysis, reflection and debate on new technologies, in particular biotechnologies, and their democratization. Measured by the articles submitted and published, and judging from the comments received so far, the journal is well on its way to succeeding in its intent. However, in order to fully realize its aims, a good and global distribution of the journal is also crucial. Until now, Tailoring Biotechnologies has been sent to several thousand individual subscribers to the former Biotechnology Development Monitor, as well as to hundreds of university and public libraries and many research institutions. We intend to keep on distributing the journal to all those organizations that are working in (bio)technology-issues. However, this will only be possible when university and public libraries, research institutions and high salaried researchers are willing to pay the subscription fee of the journal, which should enable us to disseminate the journal also to those individuals, groups and organizations that are unable to pay for the journal but for which it is important to participate in the scientific debates on redesigning biotechnologies. The ultimate aim of the journal is to become an *open-source journal* which can be freely distributed, and to become a common resource and property of its readers, preventing the establishment of a new knowledge divide. However, a classical problem in open source systems is that still some funding is necessary to guarantee existence. *Therefore we make an urgent plea to all well-paid researchers, research institutions and especially libraries in developed and developing countries to pay the subscription fee.*

The topic of globalization is a recurrent theme in Tailoring Biotechnologies (see, for example, Schuurman in Vol. 1 Issue 1, Keune in Vol. 1 Issue 2, and Sassen in Vol. 2 Issue 2). This issue of Tailoring Biotechnology starts with a piece by **Aldo Bonomi** on globalization. *Towards an Anthropology of Globalization in Times of Biopolitics* is a critical discussion of the concept of globalization in which Bonomi argues that the challenge for

the social investigator consists in shifting an approach that looks mainly toward the vertical dimension of globalization and that ends up by adopting the view of the 'overfliers' of the world to a grounded approach that constructs the narrative starting from 'what there is right under foot.' Instead of the vertical opposition, Bonomi proposes to study globalization in terms of flows and nexuses, with the ultimate aim of understanding the challenges for social subjects and civil society to empower themselves.

In previous issues we have also given space to philosophers of science and technology and social scientists studying science and technology arguing for a democratization of science (see, for example, Feenberg Vol. 1 Issue 1, and Milbery Vol. 3 Issue 1). In this issue, we pay attention to the **Critical Art Ensemble**, a collective engaged with practical and intellectual work in the field of democratization of technology. In *Turning Tools for Democratizing Biotechnology into a Bioterrorist Threat*, **Herman van Wietmarschen** gives a general introduction to the efforts of the CAE and the difficulties they met when actually trying to develop democratic forms of biotechnology, resulting in a federal investigation into one of the CAE members. We also reprint in article form a CAE book chapter, *Nihilism in the Flesh*. In this article the authors discuss and criticize Social-Darwinism and sociobiology, re-emerging and re-invented in technology studies. The issue of Social-Darwinism and eugenetics is also touched upon in an opinion piece from **Steve Hughes** entitled *The End of Disorder: a case of premature termination and PTC124*. The article discusses a recent publication of Ellen Welch and a large group of co-workers who found out that a simple chemical of the oxadiazole benzoic acid family (PTC124) can suppress the consequences of some otherwise devastating mutations in human genomes. The question is raised whether PTC124 opens the door to eugenetics through its promise of fitter existence.

In *The Socialization of Science and Technology*, **Arlene Rodriguez Manzano** analyzes how new forms of knowledge and technology have helped to create the urban agriculture program in Cuba, a program which emerged against the background of an economic crisis in the beginning of the 1990s. The article describes the ways in which biological knowledge derived from the applications of biotechnology have been utilized for the development of social technologies that contribute to an endogenous development favoring those most in need. Also discussed is the importance of promoting an urban agricultural endogenous development based on social scientific knowledge which takes into account the different social spaces. The case exemplifies how food production can be organized in a decentralized way based on the use of local resources.

In *Food Sovereignty* **Wilhelmina Quaye** reviews the concept of food sovereignty as an alternative to failing conventional food policies. The concept of food sovereignty emerged in reaction to WTO negotiations in particular and neo-liberal approaches in general, and tries to form an alternative to mainstream thinking on food production. Instead of 'free trade', this recommends policies for the support of local autonomy and the right of people to determine their own agriculture and agricultural policies. However, the food sovereignty movement mainly focuses on price and protectionist policies. This article explores the implications of food sovereignty in the field of technology development. It is concluded that not only should governments be committed to promoting, defending and protecting the rights of local farmers and agricultural employees by means of protectionist policies, but also that policies should take into account the development of technology programs from a food sovereignty perspective.

The final two contributions in this issue deal with intellectual property rights. In *Plant Breeder's Rights*, **Huib Ghijsen** discusses current rights regimes, comparing plant breeder's rights with patent protection. It is argued that access to plant genetic resources is a vital part in the breeding process, needed by all breeders and as provided for by the PBR system, a keystone in the plant breeding industry. The author rejects the suggestion made by Hughes and Deibel in the previous issue of Tailoring Biotechnologies to provide full access to farmers to all breeding populations of breeders. This is considered impractical because most of the breeders' material would not be suitable for the specific aim of the farmer's breeding program, and undesirable, it is argued, since breeders would not like to provide their early breeding material to others as that would disclose their breeding goal and way of competing. In a letter to the editors entitled *Tailoring Rights Regimes in Biotechnology, Introducing DRIPS next to TRIPS*, **Niels Louwaars** suggests that debates on the tailoring of technologies have concentrated mainly on conceptual and technical aspects, with the issue of intellectual property rights having been ignored, almost systematically. Debates on tailoring biotechnologies, argues Louwaars, have to take into account the rights systems that determine which rights systems affect access to (the products of) biotechnologies, how and by whom.

