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Discovering Thoughts, Inventing Future

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Mechanistic Solidarity and the Diminution of Conscience

By G.V. Loewen

Introduction- One of the main modes of other-directedness that has only been indirectly linked with anomie, and that is the technique and technology of the modern machine, both as a metaphor for mechanism in semi-conscious working states of affairs – the public life of our large and general social role as 'one of the others' and one of the mass, producer and consumer – but also the machine as a physical enabler, a force in the material world wherein it alleviates suffering with a view to assuaging anomie. The machine houses and promotes a new set of norms. It is never normless, although often mindless. It cannot suffer itself. It does not feel the wind chill, and though it breaks down it does not die. It represents, in its obliviousness to sorrow and to ennui, an ideal form for modern humanity. We would be as it is. Functional, able to work and nothing else, turned on and off in an instant.

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Mechanistic Solidarity and the Diminution of Conscience

G.V. Loewen

I. Introduction

One of the main modes of other-directedness that has only been indirectly linked with anomie, and that is the technique and technology of the modern machine, both as a metaphor for mechanism in semi-conscious working states of affairs – the public life of our large and general social role as 'one of the others' and one of the mass, producer and consumer – but also the machine as a physical enabler, a force in the material world wherein it alleviates suffering with a view to assuaging anomie. The machine houses and promotes a new set of norms. It is never normless, although often mindless. It cannot suffer itself. It does not feel the wind chill, and though it breaks down it does not die. It represents, in its obliviousness to sorrow and to ennui, an ideal form for modern humanity. We would be as it is. Functional, able to work and nothing else, turned on and off in an instant. No degrees of emotions, only degrees of power and output. The machine as a workhorse does not so much replace the human being but exhorts him to become as it already is. It is simply easier in every way to move through a dispassionate life ignoring the passions that have created us. Machines are at once a projection of our ingenuity and a reflection of our disingenuousness. They provide us with a soulless solace. No energy need be spent in self-examination. A diagnostic mode is all that is ever required; the checking of parts and functions, with form only being questioned according to external necessities like changes in commodity production or marketing. And even though we are rapidly approaching an event horizon passed which there can be no returning, the construction of the 'thinking machine', or perhaps better, a machine that actually 'is' something in a consciously ontological sense, the mindlessness of the current machine is not the machine's alone. Finally, a short critique puts out the fire of ardor that we have manufactured as an insulated gallery within which the machine might be shown and adored. Marx famously reminded us that 'the more we put into god the less we put into ourselves', but surely that is now somewhat outdated. What 'more' does exist supplicates the machine and in its turn, it messianically proselytizes the false hope that human beings can overcome their very humanity.

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a) What is Mechanism?

Yet the machine itself is also none of these things. It is neither friend nor foe, hero or villain. It is an object in the realm of objects, and only begins its dizzying ascent as the paragon of modern life when it becomes a surrogate worker. It works itself out, as it were, and then it is cast off, its castings perhaps salvaged for another of its class or a new generation of successors that will be even better at the tasks given to their forebears. Machines also 'evolve', but they do so through the cultural selection driven by the social world. The reason the machine can never quite be 'itself' alone is that it only functions within that world, and that world, as yet, is one of humanity and not the machine as a standalone form of being or type of consciousness. No, the machine by itself is useless, but this fact absolves it of any crime. The 'satanic mills' are human places that dehumanize, and their contents are merely an expression of a suite of human sensibilities – greed and lust, certainly, but also curiosity and a drive to overcome previous limits – and thus resemble in no direct way the manner in which the machine works itself out on our behalf. The real source of the 'tremendous order of mechanized petrification' lies in us. It is we who design the blueprints from which machines are then built. It is we who reap both their benefits and are impacted by their negative effects. It is we who defend ourselves and offend others through the prosthetics of advanced weaponry, and it is we who cannot survive the ultimate ends of machines. By the mid-eighteenth century in certain specific regions, we noted with chagrin that we were being turned into machines, and it is not too much to say that we wanted company as well as a role model. In order to have both, we also realized that our new companions, without character and personality – but this is, after all, what we also were fast becoming – still had to be cared for. The machine must be kept 'healthy', as is the worker, in the same sense that we hear, every flu season, about how many person-hours are lost to the workplace by inattention to inoculations, poor hygiene and the like. This is an example of 'neo-Nazism' even as it pretends to be about concernful being on the part of the state or the employer. No healthy person enjoys being sick, but the choice between illness and work is not always decided in favor of the latter. The companionate model of the machine –

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it is good to 'have around', it performs without rancor, one does not have to 'pay' it in any direct way, and it only produces things and does not consumes them (although of course it consumes energies and other resources) – makes room as well for itself as a model of behavior. Machines are the ideal workers. They cannot be unionized and it is always we who decide on their longevity and upkeep. The group of people fashioned to care for machines and related technologies are the technicians. In many circles today this word has about the same degree of negative connotations as does 'bureaucrat' or 'politician'. Technicians are seen to be kindred to the machines they construct and take care of. They are the human version of the machine, the most mechanistic, and hence 'soulless' of humans. They are almost perceived as a hybrid. They are subject to the harshest of blandishments, and they are typecast as villains in many quarters. But are we not all technicians in an age of machinery and technology? How is anyone exempt from both interaction with, and thus at least a modicum of care for, the technology of everyday life? We live in a mechanized culture through and through, and our nature today is to include machines as part of the character of what it means to be human. Given that machines can liberate us to consider other options, what is the nature of the technician's offense? "Now it is not nature, but the technicians, who would compel us to give up the idea of freedom. The behavioral scientist who has elaborated techniques of conditioning in his laboratory brings these forward as the basis of his claim that freedom is an illusion." (Barrett 1979:xiv). In a sense, the claim that we respond as does any other animal to inputs by exhibiting certain outputs and that these can be predicted according to the kind of sensory inputs provided is saying no more than we are animals who can learn and adapt to new situations. Freedom of a sort is built in to such a scenario. If we were not free in this adaptational sense we could not respond to new inputs and learn how to 'behave' in new contexts. But this is precisely what humans *are* able to do. The inputs of general learned behavior are culled from socialization or acculturation. In so far as behaviorism, even with all of the baggage of reduction, claims that human beings learn and respond to new adaptational contexts, or better, construct out of the bare sensory inputs of what is new or altered, an adaptational and hence a cultural context, then they have claimed nothing but a support for the idea of human freedom. Yet in spite of this, it is always the reductive facet of behavioral science that is targeted. In order to understand why this is, we need to cast a glance back to what we imagine our natures as humans to in fact be: "The theoretical attitude, and the science and practice in which it is elaborated, must be seen as a new, unnatural species of life. Western science and practice are not to be understood as an instrument that serves humanity; they do not exist for the sake of human nature." (Lingis 1989:20). Why on earth not? One might well argue the very opposite: that science represents the epitome of human nature. It is methodical, driven by both evolutionary and adaptational necessity as well as curiosity, and it seeks to respond to the pressing existential questions of a finite consciousness. Nothing about our lives is purely of 'nature' anyway, so the idea of the 'unnatural' seems to be a non sequitur. Now we are aware, of course, that the products of science do not always serve our best interests as a species, and any tool can be placed in the hands of the self-serving. But this is neither a characteristic of science or an effect emanating from it. It is also part of 'human nature' to become, or have the potential to become, quite self-absorbed. Science is merely another avenue by which one can walk the path to nothing if one chooses to do so. But it is this very ability to *choose* that once again underscores the ongoing and uninterrupted presence of human freedom.

II. Control and Controller

So far, in two forms of the critique of technique, we have come up against quite reasonable objections to the deadpan idea that science, scientists, and the technologies and skills they produce and enhance, are somehow in league with either a kind of genteel barbarism or further, the devil of unfreedom. Of course, hubris, also a characteristic part of human consciousness in most cultures, might get the better of us and our 'prosthetic godhead' might begin to indulge itself in the grandiose: "He prides himself on what he believes to be his self-control and the omnipotence of his will, and despises the man who lets himself be outwitted by mere nature." (Jung 1959:26 [1951]). Certainly culture and technology, language and symbolism set us apart in a radical way from the nature that we had in the past shared with all other known creatures. Indeed, it is old hat to claim that the combination of all of these wonderfully human traits can make us arrogant to the point of blindness. But once again, there is a contradiction of terms here. Whoever has an omnipotent will never need to exercise self-control. He can have anything he wishes. He also, because of his very omnipotence, never has to bear any consequences for the fulfillment of his desires. This may be a fantasy of the super-rich in today's world, and perhaps some of these persons approach a kind of finite reality that exhibits this culmination of human passion and lack of conscience. But precisely here is where the logic of the criticism of hubris breaks down. In fact, humans are not possessed of an omnipotent will. We have a voracious imagination, no doubt, but not only is the flesh ultimately weak, so is the will. And, when all is said and done, we are all defeated by 'mere' nature, because it is a fundamental part of our nature to die. 'The most toys' may be an advertisement for human arrogance, but even those who collect and flaunt such ensembles and accoutrements does so with the knowledge that this is but a passing fancy. Indeed, one might suggest that it is the very knowledge of our limits that drives the desire to show off in this way.

Not to be blithe, but there must be more to the argument that technique, technician, and even prideful arrogance are fatal to the idea of human freedom. It must have more to do with certain combinations of these attitudes. The sense that we might adore or fetishize a machine is not even enough, because we generally are attracted to whatever eases our suffering either individual or collective, and in our society, especially the former. So what is so wrong with a little genuflection directed at the soulless object that performs and outperforms our abilities? Surely it does not stop there, say the critics, and perhaps in some very specific, but important cases, they may be correct. One setting where adoration may supersede itself and bend our intelligence to the path of nihilism is when we imagine our science to be better suited to human needs in general than the sciences or the forebears of science, were for our ancestors. This is a different order of fetish than simply praising the ease and programmed skills of technologies: "The reality is that the object of his science, and his efforts to deal with it in his cults and rituals were just as successful in controlling and manipulating the inner forces of the unconscious as are modern man's efforts to control and manipulate the forces of the physical world." (Neumann 1970:210 [1949]). Now this is a little more interesting. It not only suggests that our cultural predecessors knew what they were doing in some way – this alone is sometimes offensive to contemporary attitudes about the past and about past cultures; much of our media and humor, and even the manner in which history is taught concentrates on the perceived lack of ability or even the outright ignorance of our ancestors – but that it is we who have inverted the focus and object of our attentions from the internal to the external. Does this mean that we now, or at some point more or less recent in time, have mastered the inner world? Can all of our efforts now, finally, be directed towards cosmic mastery? I doubt it. The prevalence of neuroses, addictions, depression and anomie in our contemporary social world argues strenuously against such a simple determination. New modes of life demand new skill sets. But these self-same modes also create new problems and wrinkles in our 'nature'. *There is no one human nature*. But it is true to say that modern science is 'outer-directed'. It is the discourse that fills in Riesman's tabulation of human perceptual attitudes. If the vocational Protestant was 'inner-directed' – in this he does not depart from his ancient forefathers in terms of the intent of his ritual, all he has done is further personalize it in a process that we saw begins at least with Augustine in the Christian West – and his contemporary compatriot is 'other-directed' in a manner that creates the mass, 'one-dimensional' man, then there must also be present that which is outer-directed and thus also that which is self-directed. We saw a great deal of evidence apportioning the space of discourse of the latter, but here we can concentrate on the discourse that occupies the space of the former, that of 'outer-direction'. How does it work? Is it all of what is external that comes into its focus? "It would appear to me more correct, however, to say that science makes possible knowledge directed to the power of making, a knowing mastery of nature. This is technology. And this is precisely what practice is not." (Gadamer 1996:6 [1972]). Succinctly put, science allows for the projection of practice. It thus creates not only a new *mode of* being in the world, that of the practitioner or technician, but also a new *model for* being in the world. It is technique that occupies the space of the second form. The first, as an existential qualifier, provides the sense that our wills can fashion more than those of our ancestors. There is certainly a new potency to this sensibility, though it is obviously far from 'omnipotent'. Yet this new aspect of our self-understanding does give rise to the imaginary sensibility that we might, over the course of further ages of similar development, approach a real kind of physical and indefinite godhead. We would become, in other words, our own prosthesis and have shed the mortal consciousness that originally created it. Instead of constructing ourselves through sometimes painful and painstaking socialization and the learning of techniques, we will have created ourselves, not as did the gods, but using the model of their 'behavior' as a guide. At that hypothetical point, the technique and the technology merge and become indistinguishable. 'Human nature', as we have known it, is automatically moribund and presumably would soon be forgotten. This is an empirically documentable dream even today, though as one would expect, those who pursue this kind of goal are already highly privileged in our very much still mortal and unequal world. Today, we are almost always still in the position of clarifying the relation of technology to technique and vice-versa, and the question of creation is moot: "Genuine creation is precisely that for which we can give no prescribed technique or recipe, and technique reaches its limits precisely at that point beyond which real creativity is called for – in the sciences as well as the arts." (Barrett, op. cit:22). Yet the idea that this must be the case, or if not couched in moral terms, will more practically always be the case, is not supported by the logic of the position. Just because something is the case today and for the foreseeable future does not mean it will always be so. Not long ago, the idea of a heart transplant was considered an unattainable fantasy by most. Today we scoff, but are still intrigued, by the news of a potential head transplant. Creativity in the sense used by Barrett was no doubt a major part of the process through which past scientific and artistic achievements, especially radically original and untried ones came to be. The whole of human history, including our proto-human progenitors, is based on this process. Creativity and freedom are inextricably linked, and it seems that once again, science and its techniques, methods, and even its products, are much more of an aid in this fundamentally human quest and vision than they are a limitation upon it.

Even so, we also experience novel limits that seem to impinge upon our abilities to not only 'feel free', but to in reality be free of practical or mundane concerns. By 'mundane' I do not mean that we should ever consider ourselves unfree simply because we have to maintain basic hygiene, cook and eat sustenance, or monitor the state of our dwellings and our relationships alike. All these too, as Heraclitus reminded us at the beginning of Western thought, are intimately part of human consciousness and thus also human freedom. These 'gods' do not limit themselves in their presence, and thus they continue to provide a model for human behavior in the world at large that speaks both directly of and to freedom in that world. Doing work in that world implies freedom and creativity, and may indeed, depending on the task at hand, require both. And all tasks require of us some skill and knowledge even if these are now to be considered routine. We have always to recall that we, sometimes as much younger persons, were once without the possession of this or that stock of knowledge at hand. Its 'at-handedness' was the province, and thus also the privilege, of others than myself. I had to learn it, but in doing so, I also learned that everyone had to do the same as I did. Learning in the specific sense does more than imply that in the general; learning means being part of a process that is both specific and general at once. Reading a book means learning about the object of the book, but it is also a course in literacy. Acquiring experience of a skill means at the same time becoming more skilled. This may seem trite. It is actually the more profound part of education in all of its senses. Can the same be said of feeling freedom or unfreedom? I think it can. But here we must investigate more fully before being able to lend credit to this more puzzling and seemingly subjective phenomenon. It is also a much more recent event in historical consciousness that persons should feel an unfettered desire of any kind. This, I think, is also the result of a burgeoning and gradually evolving technology and the methods and techniques that lie behind it and also maintain it. It is, in a word, the very technique of civilization as we know it today that prompts the will to believe in an ultimate human freedom, and not the other way round, where this apparatus works to extinguish such desires.

a) The Problem of Technique Unframed

But if this is correct, what of the problem of technology that distracts us from thinking in general, pretends to do our learning for us, makes everything 'too easy' and constructs fantasy worlds where nothing of real import can ever occur? What of the fetish of information for its own sake? What of knowledge framed only in a 'need to know' basis? "No doubt information in itself can be said to be 'value-free' but this is because information on its own has no value. It only begins to have a value when it supplies a need, when it is brought into contact with some existing system of aims and purposes and fills a gap in that system, when it becomes relevant to people's beliefs and attitudes." (Midgely 2004:15). But would any information even *exist* if it did not, from the first, have at least some passing relevance to people's current beliefs and attitudes? The 'value-freedom' of information, let alone knowledge or practice, lies in being historically conscious about those every attitudes, needs, beliefs and gaps that already *do* exist and hence call out for adjustment in some way. Information, and certainly not knowledge, cannot be thought of as stand-alone objects that can be 'brought into play' or applied to an existing system within which there was an absence that somehow was made to suit such an application. If this were the case, such gaps would not exist and would have been filled, if even seen as gaps, during the original construction of any system, technological or symbolic. Each system of signs is self-sufficient from the start. Alteration must be pressed from the outside in, and for that to occur one must already presume competing systems of thought and action that see the world just a little differently than each other. To understand this dynamic otherwise does not seem to make historical sense. At the same time, it is clearly more correct to suggest that information that is left to gather dust on a shelf somewhere is more or less useless, or at least, becomes so. The dust it gathers is the sign of its absence of value. But this is a gradual affair, things or techniques, pieces of technology or even symbolic ideas – the idea of God is the most famous example that modernists are apt to cite in this context – become moribund and once again gradually are completely forgotten. Why would not something like human nature also be one of these ideas in the future? Ideas maintain their relevance, and hence their value in human affairs by in part their 'fulfillment of needs' but also in part by a culture's collective loyalty to itself; that is, the way in which it 'worships itself', to borrow Durkheim's famous phrase. One might claim that there is at heart a function to this as well, but if so, it must be of the most radiant and abstract type. 'Society worshipping itself' occurs in more than the religious sphere, and though Durkheim was speaking most directly about social contract societies, his contemporary analogies of the collective conscience also sparked great interest during his own time. In point of fact, wherever there is taken public notice that there is a society to be worshipped, the adoration, supplication, and perhaps even sacrifice to it have already taken place. Memorial celebrations concerning historical conflicts are a case study in this phenomenon. However much state propaganda is involved, one is ultimately drawn to the idea that what we are as a group, and hence, by an easy extension, what one is as a person, hinges on our willingness to defend the forms and norms of what we take to be 'our own'. This is related, of course, to our previous discussion, but it takes it in a slightly different direction. What we believe we possess also possesses us, and it is this difference that provides both the notion of what kind of things are of value to us and when we should put these value-laden items into play in any cultural system.

It is also at this moment that we realize the difference between technology and technique. We can learn techniques and thus construct technologies from them, but for the most part, once constructed and programmed, the technologies newly present cannot of their own accord, learn new techniques let alone assign new meanings to them. Indeed, 'meaningfulness' is still an affair solely of human consciousness. We may well be on the cusp of seeing a sea-change regarding this absence of value-addedness, but generally we are still in the position outlined by Sorokin some sixty years ago: "As a matter of fact, the total operations of any machine are devoid of meaning whether it is scientific, or religious, or aesthetic, or even 'absurd meaning'. The machine's operations are just certain 'motions' of its various parts, prearranged and determined by human beings. These motions have meaning only insofar as it is imputed to them by man." (Sorokin 1956:204). Yet does this last point not in part obviate those previous? Machines do help humans make meaningful statements about the universe, though not of their own volition. At this time in human history the machine is the preeminent way in which we do make meaning. And there is more to it even that this. Machines can become part of us in at least two other ways: on the one hand, prosthetic devices allow humans to lead more meaningful, that is, more diverse and hence richer, lives. More meanings are constructed the more experiences one has. Machines and kindred objects allow more humans to do just this, and more of it in our day than in any other. On the other hand, some interactions between machines and persons take on meta-prosthetic dynamic. This extension of the subject through the object calls to mind Marx's sense of the transformation of commodity relations in ideal communism, where, instead of a subjection to the object, we have rather a fulfillment of a person's abilities by the tailored use of machines and objects. There are many famous cases of this even in capital. Lance Armstrong without his bicycle, or Eddie Van Halen without his guitar appear to us as somehow incomplete. This is no mere prosthetic, but an extension of a highly focused and practiced mastery of the subject into the world by virtue of an object that is no longer solely a machine. These kinds of specialized objects and their human possessors have created a category of machine that is a much fuller participant in the making of meaningful experience. In capital, such a phenomenon is severely limited in a way that Marx claimed it would not be in hypothetical communism, but it is still widespread enough to be recognizably distant from the simple sense that a machine is absolutely nothing without its human operator. This said, we could also call to mind Isaac Stern's famous comment about his Stradivarius on the Ed Sullivan show around the same time as Sorokin's comments were published. When in the post-performance interview Sullivan suggested that the violin had a beautiful sound, Stern retorted gently that he 'didn't hear anything'.

Now machines are one kind of object. This category has proven a little more diverse than just that which contains the material focus of a fetish. It also, and perhaps this is the first salient thing in our kind of social organization, contains objects that hold value within them. We are told that some things 'hold their value' better than others, down to details such as the color of a sports car versus some other shade. 'Resale red' is one adaptation of what appears to be an empirical statement. This kind of thing is trivial, of course, but the fact that it exists should give us a sense that the machine is a highly nuanced catalyst for meaning, even though it does not yet make meaning 'on its own'. But when is a machine ever 'on its own' in any ultimate sense. Perhaps the wreckage of disused machinery, shipwrecks that lie buried in sand or rest uneasily at the bottom of seas and oceans, might be examples of a kind of aloneness that regularly assails human beings, but these are no longer functioning artifacts. Even in their non-functional status qua machine they continue to make meaning, sometimes far more than they did while 'alive' in the mechanical sense of the term. *RMS Titanic* is perhaps the most famous example of this resonance from beyond the mechanical grave, as it were. It continues to exert a 'presence' on our culture, both in entertainment and in homiletic. And here, it was nothing about the machine *per se* that led to its demise. Human hubris created it, and human hubris destroyed it. Because of this relationship, objects like shipwrecks 'hold their power' in the way that other kinds of commodity objects hold their value. Their corpse contains a corpus, their body as artifactual and historical, yes, but also as something that can be read, a work about work and its demise. Work, overwork, the sensuality of romance and the daydream of nostalgia, the ever-pressing question regarding what it must have been like to 'be there', *RMS Titanic* among other objects of this sort remain the preeminent loci of false memory and fictive kinship. They give us an insight into what it might have been like to indeed be somewhere else, for instance, at the origin points of the great religions. This much more profound 'moment' is shrouded in a greater mystery, partly contrived by those who routinized the new callings, but also partly obscured by the simple vicissitude of a lengthy history where, the further it recedes from the present, the less record of it we possess in the present. These histories too have a corpus and a corpse, but the first reanimates the second in a perennial fashion. Just as a landmark film might pretend to have been there, whether on a ship or with a prophet, human beings rekindle romance and sensuality in general with one another every time we couple. These couplings are experienced as kindred to the 'extension of the subject through the object' that artists and musicians experience, for our love-partners are also desirable objects and we wish to invest ourselves in them in a specific manner. They also can 'hold their value' over the long term, even though the intensity of the experience of their value to us may, ironically, be heightened due to the briefer chronology of our affairs with them. The body of the person, exegetical text, shipwreck or some other disused or destroyed machine or for that matter, buildings – Hitler's forward eastern front command post in the vine-covered woods of Poland remains disused but it is considered to be a historical site of some value; less valuable perhaps but still extant is the Panzer construction and proving grounds complex, also shrouded in forest at present, in Germany proper – hold a power over us and also thus apply a power to us. Note that these kinds of places or things also have an aura about them, which approaches that of sacred venues. So does the person with whom I am in love, both before and after sex. It is not only a case of desire and nostalgia, or even reanimation: "At issue, rather, is the type of power brought to bear on the body and sex. In point of fact, this power had neither the form of the law, nor the effects of the taboo. On the contrary, it acted by a multiplication of singular sensualities." (Foucault 1980:47 [1978]). This sometimes geometric adumbration of a specific experience suits well the capitalist penchant for consumption and unit sales. One might take in a film, but there are present, almost as a kind of phenomenological envelope, all of the other accessories associated with the main attraction. A concert might have its t-shirts and caps, a museum display of artifacts from *RMS Titanic* the same. There are duplicates of the media produced for private use. There are gifts galore to be given to the lover, including those that animate the body via prosthesis and thus heighten the experience of sensuality and indeed, make it diverse. Such commodity complexes do quite literally 'go forth and multiply' and Foucault's language should be taken in this metaphoric vein as well.

It is not so much the presence of a machine, moribund, destroyed, fully functional and current, or slowly eroding or corroding in the backwoods of our imaginations, and not even its original purpose, that is key. Beyond both presence and purpose is the calling of the machine. Though we might have invested great time and thought into its construction, we now have the expectations that it will perform for us a feat that takes us not only beyond labor, but also beyond thought. The machine, increasingly, does our thinking for us, and it is *in* this way and this way alone that its existence begins to impinge on the freedom of our own.

b) Prosthetic Proscriptions

If we replace the subjectivity of human thinking with the objectivity of that of a machine, we begin to understand the difference between imagination and creativity and control and possession. The first includes and necessitates a certain 'freedom' to be found in human consciousness alone. The second seeks and constructs for itself the will to certainty, and the ability to be certain contains the truth of unfreedom and thus necessitates neither creativity nor imagination. On top of this, machine-thought inverts the relationship between essence and effect: "Control is a by-product, not the essence, of scientific verities. A by-product cannot be regarded as the necessary criterion of verity." (Sorokin, op. cit:44). For human thought to occur, freedom is essentially part of its source. Since science is a particularly adept version of human thought, whatever control it gives to us regarding the surrounding nature in which we live is an effect, and thus an effect of thought. But machine-thought in its essence is about control first, and necessitates the ultimate absence of freedom. Until we build 'thinking machines' – and note how we only manage to define thought in our own terms; are there other forms of sentient intelligence even on this planet that we do not recognize because of this species-bias? – this will remain the case. There is no 'ghost in the machine', after all: "The soul was still an accepted part of the model in Newton's day. But it has always been an unsatisfactory device. It was too simple to deal with the manifold functions of consciousness, and too disconnected from the physical mechanisms to be capable of driving them. So it was gradually sidelined." (Midgely 2004:50). Indeed, the machines that have 'soul' are, ironically, those that have been either destroyed or memorialized in some other non-functional manner. As long as a machine is working, maintaining its original purpose as something that produces something else that is also of material value – and perhaps, inevitably, of some symbolic value in many case – it provides the solace of the absence of conscience, the flight from soul. Its function alters dramatically when it becomes disused, and the manner in which it itself was sidelined or sabotaged can also mean much to us and thus to its power of regenerating its murky presence. So there is a continuity of value in a machine without that value being held to a continuity of purpose. One could argue that the 'purpose' of a fellow human is to fulfill their self-defined destinies. We decide the fate of a machine, though enacting these decisions may come as a surprise, or an unintended consequence of incompetence or arrogance, accidents and design flaws, warfare or other deliberate destruction. Note too

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that the line between destruction of this kind and desecration is difficult to discern. Just as science is the child of religion, the technologies constructed by scientific discourse are kindred to the sacred fetishes of worship. Modern discourse may bely or even be in outright denial of this relationship, but in spite of this, the history, the genealogy, the pedigree of this kinship is well known and cannot be overlooked in any simplistic or reductionist manner: "Within the atomistic idea of nature there lies a distortion of the natural picture of the world oriented toward the forms of things and living being and, along with this distortion, a *depletion of meaning from all events.*" (Gadamer 2001:97 [1999], italics the text's). In general, this process has been associated with the 'objectification' of the world. The human, with her ambiguous being experiencing the world as a series of puzzling aporetic or even aleatory events, cannot be, it is claimed, fully objective. Along with the ability to objectify comes the ability to disenchant. Between La Mettrie and ourselves lies the giant analytics of Weber. But surely it is the presumed distance between subject and object that creates the loss of 'magic' in the world. For forces and meanings were objectified long before the advent of a serious and systematic scientific discourse and the rise of its technological enterprise. Whether the effect of the gods or other sources incompletely known to humans, the world and its effects, its fates and utter dismissals of human faculties and projects, were not 'subjective' in any meaningful manner. They stood, rather, as objects over against our desires and more often than not, thwarted our nascent scientific abilities. Indeed, they might be influenced and cajoled by the instrumental use of magic, since the language of magic was also their own language, but they could not be ultimately harnessed and controlled with any certitude. It is just this combination of control and certainty, as we just saw with the outcome of machine-thinking, that was absent from a pre-scientific symbolism and literacy. But this is only one form of objectivity, and a very recent one at that. Indeed, the ancient gods were not so much seen as being 'in control' of their powers, only as possessing them and apparently whimsically dispensing them in the world, underscoring our human sense that in spite of Prometheus and like figures around the world, that human life was still fragile and always on the edge of something other to itself.

Hence prediction was placed at a premium. Those who claimed to know the future were exalted. Those who made the further and more detailed claim that they knew how everything was controlled and for what purpose, past, present, and future, became so valuable that their priestly 'calumniations' gained them, after a fashion, a more or less permanent presence in history. The priest proper is not of great interest today, but soothsayers and fortune-tellers of other types remain with us, from the analyst to the economist, from the fashion critic to the Las Vegas odds-maker. Anything to get a better sense of what is going to happen. This desire to 'be there' before the fact is the obverse of the desire to have been there after the fact. Whether imagining that we trod the decks of the ill-fated vessel or the floors of the ill-lit and shadowy bunker, to consort with the vanquished or to be vanquished, to witness the finish of the derby as in a vision, or perhaps, more daringly, to attempt to know the hour of our own demise, this projected 'metaphysics of presence' has been an *objective* combination of anxiety and aspiration for likely most of the length of human history. I call it objective simply due to its shared meaningfulness in the social world and the distance that we feel as living subjects of our own time and no other - that is, we cannot in reality trade the present for either the past or the future – as well as the problem it presents to us as an historical object and element of discourse. 'Prediction' is not the same as predictability. The former is both an act and an object, the latter a process and a desire. They contain both a subject and an object. To objectify in this area is to do something quite specific: "Increase in efficiency at the cost of depth and intensity is the hallmark of this process." (Neumann, op. cit:401). This is the better-recognized part of the relationship today. Critiques of such systems are in great abundance, though not at all necessarily heeded in any general way, and there is no need to adumbrate them at this moment. But the subjectivity of the relationship is often still obscure, mainly due to the fact of our participation in it as well as our desire to exert that very predictive certitude that is predicated upon some kind of control of the situation, whether it occurred in the primordial past or has yet to happen. In a Kantian vein, we find ourselves torn between rationality directed to external events and social forces and the ethics of demanding that oneself be treated as an end in itself: "In his relation with external nature, the rational one is lord; the general name for slavish resignation to the goods of fortune, rather than dominion over them, is avarice or miserliness. In his relations with others, the rational one requires that he always be treated as an end; depravity in social dealings is not identified as hard-heartedness or lack of compassion but as servility." (Lingis 1989:51). Here we find the subject willing himself to be objectified in an entirely different way than we do the machine. I take myself as my own end – though I may be willing, pending the context and goal, to act as part of someone else's ends as well – as well as taking myself to be above, though not aloof to, the nature that surrounds me. The dignity of the rational subject contains the person and at the same time controls the self. The 'self', in this sense, is the space of desire. The person the space of the public and of community in the sense of the generalized other. Of course we can also desire community in the intimate sense, but this is not what is being spoken of directly here. Self and person must be

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distanced from one another in a way mindful of the distinction between public and private. Here too, the machine has none of these boundaries. There is no 'private machine', only privately owned mechanisms that are as such elements of the means of production and objects within the technical category of private property, and machines do not require 'privacy' in any sense of the word. Machines are only private or public because they are either deemed owned or used in these senses and spaces. Finally, there is no sense that the machine differentiates itself, or is differentiated by us, for that matter, along the 'Kantian' lines of public person and private self, or that desire and anxiety may both conflict or be allied to one another pending circumstances. The human self requires these distinctions lest it fall into the existential category that contains machines and other objects. If the self is too self-possessed, it collapses is conscience and thus these other ethical and rationally defined boundaries also collapse. Instead of desiring the ability to be more sure of things, historically and future-oriented alike, we desire certainty itself. That is, we desire to be the *source* of the certain, and not merely someone who is informed of it through other sources. These kinds of people have lost their person *per se* and have replaced it with a kind of one-dimensional personality: "Their ruthless energy is accordingly very great, because, in its one-track primitivity, it suffers from none of the differentiations that make men human." (Neumann, op. cit:391). Certainly single-mindedness allows one to focus one's energies and aptitudes to a very specific task at hand, with a view to an abstract, but still specific end-goal. In this, we humans are 'aping our ideals' in the way Nietzsche cautioned us against. The 'forms' or essential figures of Western idealism might be brought to earth, though not to ground, by our focus and energy if we direct it long and hard enough at their current position. This attempt at action at a distance implies a number of disconcerting things: it recapitulates the anxiety about historical happenstance and the inability to predict one's fate, either short term or long; it is mounted on the same horse of hubris that constructs grand artifacts and then might also destroy them; it collects to itself the ends of others and transforms them into its own ends; it ignores the reality of its own finitude and seeks to become immortal within its own material time, etc. Ultimately, it too finds the path to nothing so interesting – how could there be an existing way to something that does not exist? – that it resigns from the job of being human: "Even as it is carried out, however, the Platonic doctrine of ideas sees, as it were, no necessity to discuss how the things of nature in their individuality and multiplicity actually participate in the being of ideas." (Gadamer 2001:134 [1999]). This disconnect prompts the action to bring the ideas to earth, to make the forms incarnate. No doubt this sensibility played an important role in the idea of a God on earth, an incarnate version or corporeal doppelganger of an incorporeal deity, suddenly human, or akin to human being, and thus, on the ethical side of things rather than that ontological, somehow also able to represent all of humanity in this intensely focused being which is also and essentially Being.

This process can also be seen as a kind of *a priori* supplication or worship. One hopes to speak into being the forms while also suggesting that their presence constitutes a communion. Like the classical cults mentioned above, we humans believe that to access this other kind of being we must transcend our individuality – the corroborree or the orgiastic agape and a great number of other versions of collective conscience-raising – and our multiplicity because the forms or essences are said to partake in neither. But the error here is more or less obvious. To imagine that a category can represent itself in its essence is to dispose of the reality that the elements that have been so grouped together have relevance to the principle by which they are categorized. We imagine, in other words, an inductive procedure to be a deductive one. We have observed similarities in the world. Sometimes, and especially of late with mass and technically accurate manufacture of commodities, such objects may be basically the same thing. It is these things that appeal to our sense of order and the logic of sets. The principle, the terms of grouping, follow from the observations and connections we make in the world. No form can be imagined without some sense of material 'incarnation' first. To invert this relationship is to exalt the form over the substance: "This would be an interpretation of a formal principle of explanation as an actual force, which does not become any more real because men believe in it [ ] Worship does not transform an idol into a god." (Lösch 1967:243 [1945]). Indeed, one could more plausibly argue that while substance is given form by artifice and manufacture, the formation of things in the world, not so different from the socialization of persons, at once there is also a gestalt quality that is created by the presence of the formed object. Some correlate to human consciousness, though inert and non-sentient, may be seen in the material object, just as we append to natural forms the moniker 'nature' as a holistic set of forces tending to the same purpose over the long term. We see, for example, utility in this or that item in the object world. But these things are also items *of* that world, that is, they represent a class of things that are manifestly different from those who constructed them. Perhaps the ultimate goal of the incarnate god was to prove that the subject too could become as the object, or further, that the subject was also an object in its essence. Materialism as a 'doctrine of ideas' might have had its ironic beginnings in a discourse that promoted its very opposite.

III. Discussion

If this is the case, then we have another way of looking at the messianic machine. It too becomes a full participant in the history of incarnation, the transfiguration of subjectivity through objectification into something that is both objective – we trust and believe in the measurements of machines, though we also understand that they can break down or make mistakes – and objectifying – in that the world itself now becomes more objective and certain because it has been measured by something that has no subjectivity to it. The machine, since it cannot become distracted by the world, does not see the world so much as it gazes right through it. It discerns something about the world that escapes us, but the value of this aspect of the social world made object is ambiguous, even objectionable. We might well ask what is it productive of? What more can we know concerning our self-understanding through this non-human incorporated gaze of the incorporeal made material? Surely what it lends to us is more on the order of another set of tools, akin to the ethics that a God on earth might bequeath to us, the 'teachings' of the messiah. The machine version of the messiah leaves us its teachings – data, in the broadest sense – and, akin to the gibberish of the logos that spoke forth from the classical temples, it now falls once again to subjectivity incarnate to interpret it and give it some meaning. It is our job, and our job alone, to make both the messiah and the machine meaningful in the social world as it is. No doctrine of forms, Platonic or otherwise, can accomplish this on its own. What we bring to data is experience, something a machine cannot have, and something that a messiah is not deemed to need – he is, after all, the God made subjectively real, but he loses nothing of his omniscience in being made so. Experience, including experience of interpreting the data generated by a machine, is the crucial element in any process of interpretation. Modern exegetics has nothing to do with scripture. It is completely oriented to the scripts that machines produce for us – measurements, numbers, and such things that by themselves rest no differently than the pure logos spoken in tongues. The tongues of the machine, like the tongues of the dead, speak a language wholly different from living human beings. But any language can be interpreted, and our experience tells us that in the case of the machine, at least, we have some idea of what we are about given the transfer of these data of forms into the world of substance and its measurable 'success' in that world.

Not that religious ideas have been an abysmal failure. There is more argument about them because we are less trusting, at least nowadays, of the vehicles by which they are said to appear among us. These vehicles, oracles, priestesses, sermonizers, and other sundry role players are human as well. We may be soon approaching the time when thinking machines will have to be distrusted in the same way that we are always and already aware that our fellow humans might have ulterior motives even if they are being honest with us. Indeed, the thought of machines will make the idea of the machine obsolete. These will be beings like ourselves, sentient and conscious, with the ability, we assume, to also possess a conscience. The moment there is a ghost in the machine the machine itself is transformed into something else. We seem to both desire this moment and fear it, given our entertainment fictions that serve us equal helpings of salvation and apocalypse to this regard. It is not enough to say that because persons of Jewish background produce most of these fictions that we are somehow being duped into believing them. No, such commodities are produced precisely because the anxieties and aspirations that make them recognizable and even entertaining are already widespread in the larger society, no matter what ethnicity is involved. Machines can save us, and hence save our souls, in the same way as could this or that messiah. But machines can also destroy us, as the vindictive godhead of the same traditions was said to have already planned. The millennial character of the machine must be recognized for what it is: easing suffering in the human world is tantamount to death, for it is only in death that all cares can be forsaken.

Of course, this too can be spun in a way that suggests that suffering is the true path to a more mature humanity. This is utter nonsense. What we are being cautioned against is rather the sense that one can alleviate the pain of being human and in this way humanity is saved. It is exactly the opposite of this. The way we are includes both sorrows and joys. Taking either away amounts to dehumanizing. Perhaps this is the ultimate goal, but we should recognize it for what it is. Like the diversion, pastime, or hobby, such energies that are given to it, supplications of their own sort and design, cannot be said to be entirely of no inherent merit. They may force the unimaginative to gain some sense of vision. They may improve the technique of a skill that had lain latent within one. They may enhance one's sociability and teach lessons in history. It is only when they duplicate writ small in nebulous and unconscious fashion the mode of production at large that they fail in their business of expanding the mind: "Under the prevailing conditions it would be absurd and foolish to expect or demand of people that they accomplish something productive in their free time; for it is precisely productivity, the ability to make something novel, that has been eradicated from them. What they then produce in their free time is at best hardly better than the ominous *hobby*." (Adorno 1998:172 [1969], italics the text's). Like the logos within the walls of the temple or held within the mouths of the oracles, a hobby by itself can have no meaning relevant to human life. This much and this far one can agree with Adorno. But a hobby enacted, as an interest in the world, can and often does depart from being another mere manner of replicating the more necessary commodity relations by which it is supplied with the goods and tools it needs to replenish its vitality and live on. Certainly, hobbies and interests do consume things. Almost any hobby has surrounding it a plenitude of things that one can or must purchase in order to 'do' the hobby in the first place. Thus hobbies too do not take one into another world. They are minor means of keeping the usual productive-consumptive cycle going. At the same time, these pastimes can become serious threats to the integrity of the proletarian relation to the means of production. The worker, in his or her 'free time', may in fact construct the 'free labor' of the communist. The interest may become more important than work. The interpretation of self that follows from this might turn our heads in the direction of humanity proper, rather than economy, as we begin to realize that there is much more to life than the work life. That hobbies seem to mimic work and require time in a similar manner is misleading. Such interests that are *not* demanded of us make us more human.

They may begin as a response to the hue and cry of 'finding oneself' or even the sentimental idea of vocation, but they can quickly depart from such models and idols and become serious, intense, artistic and even ethical. The idea of working on one's own at something that no one else may care about takes us some distance from both the ancient notion of collectivity as well as the modern sense that we should all become as famous as possible and seek as much recognition and reward from the world as we can get: "Everything modern is recognizable in the fact that it artfully steals away from its own time and is capable of creating an 'effect' only in this fashion. (Industry, propaganda, proselytizing, cliquish monopolies, intellectual racketeering). [ ] But they are only the masked cries of *anxiety* in the face of philosophy." (Heidegger 1999:15 [1988], italics the text's). The self-absorption of the hobby or interest contains a protest against the anxiety of the modern. It does not cry out as a plaintiff, it speaks its way into being a critique. It says to the wider world that there is not only time for oneself but that there is also energy left over from the apparatus of economy and politics for myself. The private interest that masks itself as individuated and perhaps even idiosyncratic consumption has the ulteriority of authenticity. Perhaps in our world this is the only way in which ontological authenticity may be had? We must work something out for ourselves. This demand is no different from those who petitioned the oracle for a response regarding the future, the past, or even a present trouble that persisted in the face of common sense and experience. Simply attending the temple is not enough. One must put oneself into a dialogue with what animates the place. Our modern temples are no different to that regard. They present the opportunity for dialogue, but they are, as we are, one thing and one being, and to interlocute with oneself is in fact that specialty of the private interest, including hobbies. Even here, the self is not alone, as history and technique, design and pedigree all come immediately into play. To affect a presence is not to be present and thus is to miss the opportunity to understand something new through an interaction that is itself novel: "We go to the galleries each season as we go to the salesrooms of the automobile companies – to see what new lines have been developed. Art styles become obsolete like the old models of cars. Art and the artist become assimilated to the production lines of the technical order." (Barrett, op. cit:240). This attitude is inevitable if we have forgotten the purpose of art. If the purpose of the car is utilitarian – no matter its technical qualities it is a point A to point B machine; its virtuosity of design no doubt has an aesthetic to it (a fine marque produces the feeling of superiority in its driver and finery for its owner) – the purpose of art has no such function. It is fair to assert that the car, amongst other commodities and mass manufactured objects, has ascended in the direction of artistry, if not art, while some works of art and their makers may have descended in the direction of mere manufacture. But this dual inclination towards one another is not a function of the lack of 'Culture' in modern culture. In fact, no society in history can boast of a more educated and literate general public, sad as that may sound to some ears. There is even great interest in becoming educated about consumption itself. We are aware that we are being exploited as workers. We are becoming more aware that human beings are destroying the earth. We do not wish to annihilate ourselves and are soundly suspicious of politicians who seem blithely unaware of the dangers on this score. Perhaps all of this is a case of too little to late, but we also are more willing to heed this chastisement as well. No, the working of utilitarian objects into art and the less obvious decline of the elite idea of what art should be tell us that we care *more* about our work in the world than ever we did before. The artist wants to be relevant to everyday concerns; the car manufacturer desires to improve the quality, and qualities, of his product. It is another error of judgment to think that art and function must be forever separated and, more critically, that the former can never stoop to the level of commodity while the latter can never overcome that same level.

Clearly even within the envelope of ratiocination – the unbounded rationalism of the forms set loose in the world of rationalized institutions and personal rationales – there remains room for human expression that is at once both humane and also has the potential to speak of inhumanity. It is both critical and ethical, in other words, and the space reserved for it is merely the ground zero of its always-immanent explosion onto the wider scene. The thinker who embodies both critique and ethic is responsible for the question of form in the world: "Nietzsche's task, the Zarathustran mission, is to find, now, in the midst of rational culture itself, the form of ancient joy that might still be possible." (Lingis 1989:74). Our response has not been a resounding affirmation that it continues to be so, but rather, a cautious but persistent murmur that says yes to the possible but not always yes to the actual, and never yes to the inevitable. We must work, in other words, to attain the space of the possible in all things human that seek their own humanity, joys and sorrows alike. It often seems that the latter are forced upon us, and that we would never do so choose them ourselves. But this is another error, this time in ethics and not aesthetics. This error – to see in sorrow only evil but at the same time to also see only insight in suffering – rests within a genealogy that contains the idea that we must make known both our sorrows and joys to others in order for them to be evaluated as being human or on the way to becoming humane.[i] Back to the hobby for a moment: these kinds of private spaces where it may well be that no one else cares about what we intensely work upon are the epicenters of a seismic existentiality that in turn can shake all mantles of discourse and rationality alike. Restoring antique automobiles or art lends itself to this quaking, this unsettling of the ground beneath us, that which we have assumed will always hold us upright and catch us if we fall. Here, in the space of the vision of the individuated interest, we move ourselves to fall harder than ever before. There are no witnesses. We must pick ourselves up. There is no doctrine of forms or soteriological manual, we must give ourselves incarnation, and we must save ourselves. These interests are introspective in the sense that we must work on them on our own, but they are not fundamentally divorced from the world or from history, because their material comes from both of these sources at once. The solace that is provided us is no mere opiate. It may begin without soul – it is only 'possible', in the sense that Nietzsche was interested in descrying – but its intensity and focus creates a new soul, or the sub-text of soul is brought to light, or the occluded soul within the being is renewed in some other way. The details of such a process are not important, in the same way as this or that ritual of the diverse cultures of our shared human heritage worked to the same purpose by different means. That joy is possible suggests that its plausibility remains in doubt without action on our parts. It will not simply happen to us; in the same way that Sapir famously critiques the idea that culture could simply occur to us while we were at rest within the very confines of the absence of soul that Adorno and Barrett rail against. There is no culture machine. Even a messiah must have disciples. There is no progression of maturity or emotion, experience of joy or sorrow without the fullest agency and focus of human beings. And it is this combination of action and interest that is precisely, in our own time of rationalization, found to a great extant within the private interest or 'hobby'. It's real ominousness lies in its departure from the norms and forms of the expected everydayness of decaffeinated decorum. For in general technology provokes an emotional, even guttural response from us, especially since 1945: "One must thus say the progress of technology encounters an unprepared humanity. It vacillates between the extremes of an affect-laden opposition to rational innovation and a no less affect-laden craving to 'rationalize' all forms and sectors of life, a development which more and more acquires the form of a panic flight from freedom." (Gadamer 1996:24 [1972]). To make everything more certain is, as we have already stated, one of the chief motives for and effects of the presence of machines. Just as the old messiahs told us that such and such was the revealed truth of things, and all we needed to do was convert to this new framework and work for its worldview in this world, the machine takes this very world and works it into its own framework. We can all the more easily follow its workings, and need much less of the faith that was called on us to hold within our breasts by the messianic machines' human predecessors. All the same, we are hardly the naïve and docile sheep that are extolled as one of the ancient metaphors for the faithful. In pursuing or opposing rationalization, in focusing our 'free' time in private interests or hobbies, in our political apathy we make concrete this-worldly choices to follow along and live within the new frameworks just as did our ancestors with those more traditional worldviews that somehow linger on in the face of the age of technology: "In fact, the capitalist is not imposing his will upon the rest of us. He is doing our will as much as following out his own, for we consume his products and want more of them." (Barrett 1979:227). Something sells because a desire for it exists. Now, it is true to say that modern advertising in large measure helps to create and maintain such desires for commodities, and their proliferation and diversity, that have little to do with authentic or empirical human needs. But did human beings ever need the latest religion? In an epoch where material goods were, for the vast majority of those alive, basic and necessary, symbolic goods performed a function that in our own time they have lost. That is, they constructed the desire for the other-world where material limits and needs, ranging from hunger to death, were permanently overcome. Now that in 'developed' regions of this world such material necessities are often met, the draw of the symbolism of another world that has nothing more to offer on that score at least has waned. We have seen, of course, that human finitude remains a limit to our desires, collective and individual, but the end-game of the presence of the messianic machine is the thinking mechanical consciousness, a form of being that places itself on the evolutionary stage as the next step in human maturity. Its ultimate card is its sense of dignity;

not even organic death and decay can assail it, and it can thus move on to the stars.

IV. Conclusion

It is human dignity that is appealed to by, and is also the appeal of, both religious and technological suasion alike. The first, as we have seen, promotes the overcoming of death, that most grievous insult to our sense of self. The second promotes the overcoming of labor and suffering whilst alive, which is certainly attractive as well. In the longer term, machines must scale the most daunting wall of organic ends in order to impart the same order of desire upon us as did the religions. But we are getting closer. The extremities of anxiety when confronted by technology or becoming its unthinking acolyte will both be answered by the thinking and evolving machine or self-repairing and replicating cyber-organism. That such an apparently outlandish goal even exists suggests that for humans, "…their sense of dignity and the importance of preserving it even in extreme circumstances was not any the less vital to them. [ ] Imagination and fantasy are not on trial…" (Bravo, et al 1990:103). Perhaps not, as the messianic promise of indefinite life while remaining in this world appeals so directly to both. Indeed, both imagination and at least the phantasm of rational projection into the future are required by such plans and goals. Those who shun technology 'affectively' are content to believe that such worlds are only fantasy, while those who embrace technology no less emotionally are apt to entertain possible future ventures of this sort as part of the same category that includes what one might do for one's next summer vacation. Either way, we are not seeing ourselves, let alone the imagined otherness of machine being, in a very clear and rational light. The solace of escaping the burdensome soul of humanity acts like a light that draws the moth. Perhaps, after a certain large number had been burned, their Icarus-winged flights ended in ashen falls from grace, the weight and remains of their collected carcasses will put out the candle itself, and we will descend into the darkness of the nocturnal vigil once again.

In the meanwhile, the cult of technology fetishists continues unabated, while a rival group decries its existence. The presence of these two extremities, as Gadamer suggestively labels them, containing both proselytes and prosthetics, is hardly limited to concrete technological mechanisms, but pervades all of discursive and even social life. The interest in statistics and related programs of data collection and analysis arose around 1900, but it really took the stage after the Second World War: "The cult of 'social physics' and 'physicalist psychology' as a science of processes different from the physiology of the nervous system, has been growing indeed among modern sociologists and psychologists, and there is no clear sign, as yet, of its recession." (Sorokin 1956:187). Today such research paradigms dominate the social science scene. This to the extent that 'humanistic' work is seen, sometimes good-naturedly as part of the academic division of labor, and sometimes with a sneer, as being part of someone else's duties, such as history perhaps or even philosophy. Even qualitative research within the human sciences occupies a scarce minority share of funding and activity. Why has this become the case? Simply put, the messiness of the human endeavor does not lend itself to finely discriminating analytics. In order to keep the idea of 'the study of man' alive, those involved have had to adopt methods and developed faith in outcomes that resemble more and more their much more materially successful disciplinary cousins, the applied sciences. Most people are aware that natural science research has some relationship to applications therefrom, like chemistry and medicine or physics and engineering. All of us use the outcomes of this research dynamic every day of our lives. We rely on them in the same way as we rely on the machine. No social science can compete with either their presence in our world - not to mention the way in which they have, along with the machine, utterly transformed it – or their influence over it. At best the odd economist is seen on the news, and the perhaps even odder psychologist gains a cult following in entertainment media. Very little else from either the human sciences or the humanities and arts is ever so placed. Well, it is much more difficult to make the connections between these other forms of thought and research and daily life, and indeed, often enough there is no such connection to be made. At most, such conceptions that are traditionally part of historical and philosophical inquiries lie hidden at the bottom of our more mundane arguments, never brought to light because they are either taken as givens by everyone involved, or assumed to have become moribund and thus irrelevant. The harshly sardonic but commonly used phrase 'its academic' speaks to this sensibility of thinking aloud being quite extraneous to anything of practical human import. But cases do arise where historically influential conceptions come to light, such as when we are trying to evaluate the presence of machine consciousness or technological prosthesis in our lives. But when they do, we are unsure of what to think about them or how they apply: "We need some conception of human nature that we think they ought to fit as a criterion for judging them. We are always developing and updating that notion, but we never try to do without it." (Midgely 2004:107). Here, Midgely is speaking about institutions in general, but the point holds all the more so for developments that in fact will alter the conception of 'human nature' in a permanent fashion. The whole idea may have to be discarded, and it is this that requires the enlistment of all human beings in the action of philosophical work. For the ultimate irony in all of this would be if, in working so hard to overcome our own

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humanity and its limits, that we give over the final judgment on the presence of our work to that which is patently non-human, and thus has no real responsibility to carry such humanity along with it into its brave new world.

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[i] Foucault has charted this historical dynamic with detailed aplomb: "From the direction of conscience to psychoanalysis, the deployments of alliance and sexuality were involved in a slow process that had them turning into one another until, more than three centuries later, their positions were reversed." (1980:113 [1978]). One can now desire the alliance that before had limited the very desire that was its most shunned object, the most objectionable thing about it, and thus constructed as the most abject absence of solace – 'sex without love' even today is stigmatized, but what is love without sex but a return to the doctrine of 'Platonic' forms, aptly given its vernacular metaphor and suasion through the abstinence which supposedly directs us to a higher form of desire.

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Quantitative Research Study: Genetically Modified Organisms: A College Student's Perspective

By Rameca Vincent Leary
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Abstract- Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are those whose genetic material has been manipulated "artificially" in a laboratory through genetic engineering. This relatively new science creates unstable combinations of plant, animal, bacterial, and viral genes that do not occur in nature or through traditional crossbreeding methods (Non-GMO Project, 2015). With so many food options available, the aim of this study is to explore food purchasing trends of college students to determine how awareness of GMOs affects their likelihood of buying non-GMO products. Data were collected from 214 students at a southern university, using an electronic questionnaire. Results showed that even prior to survey completion; students had a relatively good knowledge of GMOs. They also felt this information would increase their likelihood of buying non-GMO products. In terms of cost, the majority agreed they would purchase non-GMO products if prices were lower. Additionally, most respondents disagreed when asked whether gender affected their perception of GMOs. Ideas for further research were also explored.

Keywords: genetically modified organisms/gmos, perceptions, health, expectancy.

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QUANTITATIVERESEARCHSTUDYGENETICALLYMODIFIEDORGANISMSACOLLEGESTUDENTSPERSPECTIVE

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

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Abstract- Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are those whose genetic material has been manipulated "artificially" in a laboratory through genetic engineering. This relatively new science creates unstable combinations of plant, animal, bacterial, and viral genes that do not occur in nature or through traditional crossbreeding methods (Non-GMO Project, 2015). With so many food options available, the aim of this study is to explore food purchasing trends of college students to determine how awareness of GMOs affects their likelihood of buying non-GMO products. Data were collected from 214 students at a southern university, using an electronic questionnaire. Results showed that even prior to survey completion; students had a relatively good knowledge of GMOs. They also felt this information would increase their likelihood of buying non-GMO products. In terms of cost, the majority agreed they would purchase non-GMO products if prices were lower. Additionally, most respondents disagreed when asked whether gender affected their perception of GMOs. Ideas for further research were also explored.

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I. Introduction

It is an issue that has sparked a wave of controversy on a global scale. Should consumers be privy to ingredients in the foods they purchase, specifically those that are genetically modified? In simple terms, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are those whose genetic material has been manipulated "artificially" in a laboratory through genetic engineering. This relatively new science creates unstable combinations of plant, animal, bacterial, and viral genes that do not occur in nature or through traditional crossbreeding methods (Non-GMO Project, 2015). While some may tout GMOs as being harmless, Geib (2012) stresses how they are linked to complications such as Morgellons disease, allergies, immune reactions, and sterility. From an agricultural perspective, Smith (2008) shares the following GMO example: "A gene from the soil bacterium called Bt (for Bacillus thuringiensis) is inserted into corn and cotton DNA, where it secretes the insect-killing Bt-toxin into every cell. About 19% of GM crops produce their own pesticide. Another 13% produce a pesticide and are herbicide tolerant" (para. 6).

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Although some farmers have chosen not to embrace GMOs, the global numbers are still rising (Jagadeesan, 2011). Smith (2008) reveals how many people digest the proteins more slowly from genetically modified foods because they also reduce the digestive enzymes in mice.

In 2013, the World Health Organization announced the transfer of the antibiotic-resistant genes inserted into GM (genetically modified) foods could also be absorbed into human cells. This news heightened negative attitudes regarding the contamination of crops, land, and water from pesticides and chemicals (Fromartz, 2006).

In our society, even the most conscious consumer may still face a conundrum because it is quite difficult to determine whether many products are "truly" non-GMO. Peterson (2011) attests, "You put one non-GMO certified ingredient into the mix and place the non-GMO certification stamp on the front label" (para. 3). Even Mark Squire (2015) of the non-GMO Project admits products cannot be verified as completely GMO free due to seed and crop contamination.

a) Purpose of Study and Theoretical Application

Realistically, there are still uncertainties surrounding GMO and non-GMO products (Van Dijk, Van Kleef, Owen, & Frewer, 2012). With so many food options available, what is a consumer to do? The purpose of this pilot study is to explore specific purchasing trends of college students at Pensacola State College in Pensacola, Fla. Will an awareness of GMO products increase their likelihood buying non-GMO items, or could other circumstances impact their decisions?

Victor Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory of motivation will offer insight into how these choices may be influenced by additional elements, whether personal or societal. The theory proposes a person decides to behave in a certain way, selecting one behavior over another, based on the "expected" result of the particular behavior (Harris & Reynolds, 2003; Lim & Dubinsky, 2004). The motivation behind a chosen behavior is determined by the desirability of the expected outcome (Zhu, Nakata, Sivakumar, & Grewel, 2013; Hemamalini & Washington, 2014). For this study, it could be expressed in relation to GMO versus non-GMO food consumption.

Furthermore, at expectancy theory's core is the cognitive process of how an individual processes the different motivational elements (Fu, 2009; Hemamalini & Washington, 2014). This processing is done before an individual makes the final choice (Stankovic, 2013). The expected result is not the sole determining factor in the decision of how to behave … because the person has to predict whether or not the expectation will be fulfilled (Boundless, 2014). This leaves room for influence, something this study will explore in great detail. Data will be gathered and analyzed to determine which variables impact college students' decisions to purchase non-GMO products or avoid them altogether.

II. Literature Review

Overall, the issue of GMOs has generated a great deal of interest and debate. When consumers lack a clear understanding of the GM (genetically modified) food industry, they often struggle to make informed decisions regarding the safety of foods they eat (Knight, 2007). Interestingly, for college students, reactions tend to vary. From a consumer standpoint, some researchers contend college students' perceptions of GMOs can determine the success of current products, including those launched in the future (Hugher, McDonagh, Prothero, Shultz, & Stanton, 2007).

Finkle and Kim (2003) conducted a GMO study consisting of Korean and American college students. Although the majority of both groups were concerned about health risks from GM foods, the proportion of Korean students (87%) was much higher than American students (58%). Their findings revealed "women and students who were more likely to invest in health through nutrition and exercise were also more likely to be concerned about GM foods" (Finkle & Kim, 2003, p. 191).

Lauk, Mosher and Freeman (2010) explored GMO perceptions at an undisclosed research university in the U.S. Surveys were administered to American and international college students to determine factors that may affect their perceptions of GM food products. Results indicated students born outside the U.S. had increased negative opinions about GM foods, a sharp contrast in the attitudes of American-born students. Meanwhile, those enrolled in physical science - based curriculums had more favorable opinions of GM foods, compared to those in other programs.

Research conducted at Sultan Qaboos University in India yielded mixed findings. Al-Rabaani and Al-Shuaili (2014) surveyed 460 randomly-selected students from eight programs of study. The results showed students had some knowledge of organic products, but their awareness of GM foods was poor. They had favorable opinions of organic food products and negative attitudes towards GM foods. While males had a higher level of awareness about both types of food, females tended to favor organic food products over GM options.

Batrinou, Spiliotis, and Sakellaris (2008) explored the perceptions of college students at a university in Greece. Of the 229 people surveyed, 63% had negative attitudes when viewing products labeled as GM. In contrast, food labels bearing GM and European Union (EU) approved seals were viewed in a more receptive manner. Despite the findings, 28% of all respondents still refused to embrace the idea consuming GM foods.

A study conducted in Italy, Norway, and England investigated what factors influence consumers to pay higher prices for non-GMO products. Miles, Ueland, and Frewer (2005) surveyed participants in each country. They concluded that receiving information about GMO traceability did not increase participants' trust in food regulators. However, specific knowledge about a product's full list of ingredients did. Goktolga and Esengun (2009) conducted similar research in Turkey. They administered questionnaires to 226 households. Their overarching goal was to determine whether families would be willing to pay more for non-GMO tomato crops. Results indicated that "household size and monthly household income had negative effects on the willingness to pay extra" (Goktola & Esengun, 2009, p. 1188). Meanwhile, an investigation of GM attitudes in Croatia revealed media stories used to persuade residents of the benefits of GMOs were losing their momentum. Renko, Brcic-Stipcevic, and Renco (2003) found that increased levels of skepticism by citizens triggered an elevated level of non-acceptance.

III. Research Questions

The aim of this pilot study was to gauge how a college student's knowledge of GMOs would impact their decision to purchase products containing them … or refrain from doing so altogether. Could knowledge "alone" serve as a catalyst for change, or would other factors influence their consumer decisions? Based on previous research, theoretical reasoning, and scarcity in academic literature, the following research questions are posed:

RQ1: Does a college student's knowledge of non-GMO products increase their likelihood of buying them?

RQ2: Is the desire to eat healthier enough to justify paying higher prices for non-GMO products?

RQ3: Does gender affect college students' perceptions of GMOs?

IV. Methodology

a) *Participants*

Participants for this study consisted of 214 students from Pensacola State College (PSC) in Pensacola, Fla. It is a state-supported school with six campus locations. The student sample included 96 males and 118 females. Ethical practices and codes of conduct were followed succinctly. Demographics for the sample such as gender, college classification by year, program of study, ethnic background, relationship status, religious affiliation, and political preference are located in Table 1.

GMO Survey: A College Student's Perspective

The survey (Appendix A) contained 35 questions that addressed the following areas: personal knowledge of GMOs, the likelihood of buying non-GMO products, factors that could hinder the decision altogether, societal knowledge of GMOs, and personal food preferences (e.g., whether GMO or non-GMO). The last section included items that did not tie in directly to the research questions, but could be used later for further data analysis. For example, two questions dealt with educational levels of respondents' parents. Another asked for students' grade point averages (GPAs). All questions were "stand alone," meaning they measured different variables. A majority were Likert-Scale items with a scale of 1-5, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

Table 1: Respondents' Demographic, Educational, Religious and Political Information

Gender	College Classification by Year	Program of Study	Ethnic Background	Relationship Status	Religious Affiliation	Political Preference
Male 45%	First Year 40%	Undeclared 24%	Caucasian 77%	Single 78%	Islamic 0%	Conservative 34%
Female 55%	Second Year 39%	Interdisciplinary 2%	Asian-American 6%	Married 16%	Jewish 0%	Moderate 48%
	Third Year 15%	Education 8%	African-American 6%	Widowed 0%	Hindu 0%	Liberal 18%
	Fourth Year 4%	Christian Studies 0%	Hispanic American 6%	Divorced/ Separated 6%	Buddhist 3%	
	Fifth Year + 2%	Fine Arts 7%	Other 6%		Christian/ Protestant 8%	
		Humanities 4%			Christian/ Catholic 14%	
		Natural Sciences 23%			Christian/ Evangelical 7%	
		Social Sciences 9%			Christian/ Non-Denom. 31%	
		Business 12%			None 4%	
		None 11%			Other 13%	

V. Procedure

The survey was created and disseminated via the online survey website, Qualtrics. Advisors from various student organizations at Pensacola State College asked members to participate on a voluntary basis. The Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society spearheaded this initiative. Several advisors also shared the Qualtrics survey link with students in their regular classes. Data

VI. Results

Collected data were exported from Qualtrics directly into the popular IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which is a software package for statistical analysis. Once the correct measure was applied to the imported variables, a determination was made to use multiple models to analyze the resulting data. The results will be discussed in a structure consistent with the research questions. They measured different variables through both categorical and continuous data. To examine the first research question (RQ1), a chi-square analysis was performed. It explored whether a college student's knowledge of GMO productswould increase their likelihood of buying them. The findings revealed significant results: x^2 *(1) = 8.768, p <.01* (Table 2).

Table 2: Chi-square Test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.768[a]	1	.003		
Continuity Correction[b]	7.918	1	.005		
Likelihood Ratio	8.753	1	.003		
Fisher's Exact Test				.003	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.728	1	.003		
N of Valid Cases	214				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 29.94. b. computed only for a 2x2 table

A crosstab analysis revealed 69% of respondents had prior knowledge of GMOs before taking the survey. Interestingly, 56% of participants admitted increased knowledge of GMOs would improve their likelihood of purchasing non-GMO products.

To analyze the second research question (RQ2), a simple regression analysis was performed. It tested whether the desire to eat healthier was enough to justify paying higher prices for non-GMO products. Data shown in Table 3 revealed the following results, supporting the regression model's significance: $F = 12.241, df = 1, p < .01$.

Table 3: Significance of Regression Model and Mean Square

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.506	1	14.506	12.241	.001[b]
	Residual	257.147	217	1.185		
	Total	271.653	218			

a. Q7: Dependent Variable

b. Predictors: (Constant), Q6

The proportion of variance in the dependent variable (e.g., justifying paying higher prices for non-GMO products) is $R^2 = .053$ *or 5.3%*. The regression equation was formulated using unstandardized coefficients provided in the output (shown in Table 4): Q7 = 4.458 – (.266*Q6).

Table 4: Regression Model Output

Coefficients[a]								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	4.458	.303		14.712	.000	3.860	5.055
	Q6	-.266	.076	-.231	-3.499	.001	-.416	-.116

a. Q7 Dependent Variable

The third research question (RQ3) explored whether gender affects a college student's perception of GMOs. It was analyzed using a t-test. The means were: 2.45 for men and 2.39 for women (Table 5). The Levene's Test for Equality of variances indicated "Equal variances assumed." The end result was not significant: $t = .413$, $df = 212$, $p = .68$; $p/2 = .34 > .05$ (Table 6).

Therefore, gender had no effect on students' perceptions of GMOs. Further examination of data revealed 35% of the respondents elected to take a neutral stance, while 51% disagreed completely. Only 13% stated they believed gender had an impacting difference on college students' perceptions of GMOs.

Table 5: Group Statistics

	Gender:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q16	Male	96	2.45	.993	.101
	Female	118	2.39	1.046	.096

Table 6: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q16	Equal variances assumed	.105	.746	.413	212	.680	.058	.141	-.219	.335
	Equal variances n/assumed			.415	206.972	.678	.058	.140	-.218	.334

VII. Discussion

Results from the study indicated respondents from Pensacola State College believed having knowledge of non-GMO products would increase their likelihood of buying them (RQ1). Through expectancy theory, Vroom (1964) argued the anticipated result is not the "sole" determining factor in the way a person behaves. It is up to the individual to determine whether or not that specific expectation will be fulfilled (Stankovic, 2013). Since there was not a 100% favorable response rate in relation to the likelihood of purchasing non-GMO products in RQ1, it is yet another indicator that our individual perceptions can be impacted by other factors instead of the "desire" to do something.

Vroom's (1964) theoretical assumption was also addressed through specific survey questions that dealt with product labeling. A resounding 57% attested non-GMO product packaging led to the fulfillment of their expectation making a non-GMO purchase. In reference to public knowledge about the dangers of GMOs, 91% agreed food manufacturers should take a proactive approach by labeling their products (e.g., either GMO or non-GMO). However, the expectation and the implementation of such labeling are "two" separate things. This is because all too often, the intentions of regulators are overshadowed by those who remain skeptical about manufacturers of GM foods on grocery store shelves (Renko et al., 2003).

Meanwhile, findings from RQ2 indicate a college student's desire to eat healthy would be enough to justify paying higher prices for non-GMO products. When asked if they earned enough money to buy non-GMO products, 42% conveyed a neutral stance, while 22% admitted they made enough to make such purchases. The majority of respondents (52%) earned less than 25,000 annually. In terms of purchasing power, this revelation shed light on who could possibly be buying non-GMO foods in households. As Vroom (1964) contended, desire can be expressed through conversations or other means … and later translated into expectancy. However, financial obstacles can also pose problems. This situation lends credence to the idea that for these college students… parents, spouses, friends, or others could be helping them in their quest to avoid GMOs. The survey also addressed additional factors regarding food choices. Although many (35%) admitted reading product packaging before making grocery store purchases, 36% revealed the thought rarely crossed their minds. In relation to fast food restaurants, 73% agreed consumers should know whether their items contain GMOs. Upscale restaurants were not excluded, as a majority of respondents (74%) also felt they should do the same.

In relation to motivation and time, it was interesting to read how respondents made food choices. Of the 214 participants, 131 agreed they normally ate fast food while in a hurry, compared to 165 who attested they preferred making their own meals at home. Interestingly, only 2% shopped primarily at whole foods/organic markets, while the majority (60%) frequented regular grocery stores (e.g., Food Lion or Publix). Although the desire to eat healthy may have resonated in the minds of many, the final decision was not always non-GMO. On average, 50% admitted eating at fast food restaurants at least once per week.

Results indicated RQ3 was not supported, meaning respondents did not think gender affected a college student's perception of GMOs. Of the 214 respondents, there were 96 males and 118 females. While 51% disagreed, 35% took a neutral stance. Of this sample, 78% were single, while only 16% were married. The fact that there were so few married participants was intriguing. Pensacola, Fla., is a huge military city, with both Air Force and Naval bases. It would have been interesting to see how a larger sample for this pilot study could have changed the scope of these specific differences.

Research questions aside, the last item on the GMO survey (Q35) addressed whether respondents "really" read the paragraph that described the nature of GMOs. A whopping 78% maintained they did, while 22% admitted they skipped it entirely. From an ethical standpoint, this question was added for sheer curiosity. It was also included to help gauge survey trends, specifically regarding content and estimated completion times. Going forward, it can help this researcher gauge how such descriptive elements can be integrated successfully in both electronic and hard-copy mediums.

a) Limitations and Proposal for Larger Study

Although this pilot study focused on GMOs and perceptions at one school, it would be beneficial to take this research one step further. With time constraints, lack of funding, and the reliance on one college, this researcher was aware of bias that could have been perceived. The study was limited to college students, many of whom were in their first (40%) or second year (39%). From a cultural perspective, 77% of respondents were Caucasian. It would have been nice to obtain a more "diverse mix" of participants. African American, Asian, and Hispanic American students each comprised 6%. At 31%, Christians (non-denominational) exemplified the highest level of participation. However, there were no respondents from Islamic, Hindu, or Jewish faiths.

VIII. Expanded Study

A larger study would entail addressing the impact of GMOs across generations, dealing specifically with Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Through a series of correlation analyses conducted among specific age groups, the intent would be determine whether age and gender have a significant impact on a person's likelihood of purchasing non-GMO products. The survey would be administered electronically through a network of colleges and universities across America, both public and private. College faculty and administrators would also be prospective respondents. In this refined study, Mannheim's (1927) Theory of Generations would be used. It suggests generations change swiftly in response to major events (DeChance, 2014). This theory can be summarized by the idea that "people resemble their times more than they resemble those of their parents" (McCrindle, 2007, p. 4). In reference to non-GMO products, it would be interesting to see if it held true for this expanded study.

VIII. Summary

Results from this study showed that even prior to survey completion, students at Pensacola State College had a relatively good knowledge of GMOs. They also felt this information would increase their likelihood of buying non-GMO products. In terms of cost, the majority agreed they would purchase non-GMO products if prices were lower. Additionally, most respondents disagreed when asked whether gender affected their perception of GMOs.

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Appendix A

Electronic Survey: Genetically Modified Organisms: A College Student's Perspective

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Online Survey: Health concerns have prompted many consumers to take a closer look at the food items they purchase. However, a desire to eat healthier does not always translate into buying products that are better for us. Numerous factors often come into play. Therefore, the focus of this survey is to better understand the choices college students make when buying food, specifically those items which contain Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Please answer each item as honestly as you can. All answers are anonymous, and results will be used strictly for academic purposes.

Consent: I understand my participation in this study should take approximately 10 minutes. I know that I may refuse to answer any question asked, and that I may discontinue participation at any time. I am aware that I must be at least 18 years of age to participate. My completion of the survey signifies my voluntary participation in this project.

What are GMOs? The following information was obtained from the Non-GMO Project: http://www.nongmoproject.org/learn-more/

GMOs are living organisms whose genetic material has been artificially manipulated in a laboratory through genetic engineering, or GE. This relatively new science creates unstable combinations of plant, animal, bacterial and viral genes that do not occur in nature or through traditional crossbreeding methods. Virtually all commercial GMOs are engineered to withstand direct application of herbicide and/or to produce an insecticide. Despite biotech industry promises, none of the GMO traits currently on the market offer increased yield, drought tolerance, enhanced nutrition, or any other consumer benefit. Meanwhile, a growing body of evidence connects GMOs with health problems, environmental damage and violation of farmers' and consumers' rights. Most developed nations do not consider GMOs to be safe. In the U.S., the government has approved GMOs, based on studies conducted by the same corporations that created them and profit from their sale. Increasingly, Americans are taking matters into their own hands and choosing to opt out of the GMO experiment. Unfortunately, even though polls consistently show that a significant majority of Americans want to know if the food they're purchasing contains GMOs, the powerful biotech lobby has succeeded in keeping this information from the public.

Q1. Prior to your participation in this survey, did you have any knowledge of GMOs?

- Yes
- No

Q2. Even if you knew information about GMOs beforehand, would this knowledge increase your likelihood of purchasing non-GMO products?

- Yes
- No

Q3. Have you ever given much consideration to product labeling?

- Yes
- No

Q4. Have you ever seen non-GMO labeling on food packaging?

- Yes
- No

Q5. Do you think food manufacturers should include non-GMO labeling on packaging?

- Yes
- No

Q6. Choosing healthy foods for consumption is of major importance to me.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q7. Although I know healthy choices are smart, I have a hard time justifying paying higher prices for non-GMO products.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q8. I would buy non-GMO products if the prices were lower than GMO products.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q9. I do not make enough money to buy non-GMO products.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q10. Buying non-GMO products is of no importance to me.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q11. I do not read product packaging, even when the items I choose appear to be healthy.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q12. I always look for non-GMO product labeling on items I buy from the grocery store.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q13. I never think about asking if my fast food choices contain GMOs.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q14. I think fast food chains should let consumers know if their products contain GMOs.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q15. I think all restaurants should let consumers know if the items they serve contain GMOs.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q16. I think gender affects a college student's perception of GMOs.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q17. For the following questions, please select the option that best suits you.

	School Cafeteria	Fast Food Restaurant	Upscale Restaurant	Prepare Food on Your Own	Other
When you are hungry, with no time constraints, where do you normally eat?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
When you are in a hurry, where do you normally get food?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
In your opinion, what is the best option for acquiring food?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q18. How many times per week, on average, do you shop at the grocery store? ________________

Q19. Is the grocery store you visit:

- ❍ A Whole Foods/Organic Market
- ❍ A Regular Grocery Store
- ❍ A Combination of Both
- ❍ Other

Q20. How many times per week, on average, do you buy meals from fast food restaurants?________________

Q21. How many times per week, on average, do you prepare your own meals?____________________

Q22. What is your college classification (by year)?

- ❍ First Year
- ❍ Second Year
- ❍ Third Year
- ❍ Fourth Year
- ❍ Fifth Year or Beyond

Q23. What is your program of study?

- ❍ Undeclared
- ❍ Interdisciplinary Studies
- ❍ Education
- ❍ Christian Studies
- ❍ Fine Arts
- ❍ Humanities
- ❍ Natural Sciences
- ❍ Social Sciences
- ❍ Business
- ❍ None

Q24. The majority of your elementary and junior high education took place in what kind of educational environment?

- ❍ Public School
- ❍ Private School
- ❍ Home School

Q25. The majority of your high school education took place in what kind of educational environment?

- ❍ Public School
- ❍ Private School
- ❍ Home School

Q26. Gender:

- Male
- Female

Q27. Your primary religious affiliation is:

- Islamic
- Jewish
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Christian-Mainline Protestant
- Christian-Catholic
- Christian-Evangelical
- Christian-Non-Denominational
- None
- Other

Q28. Politically, you are:

- Conservative
- Moderate
- Liberal

Q29. What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Widowed
- Divorced/Separated

Q30. Your cultural background is mostly:

- Caucasian
- Asian-American
- Black/African American
- Hispanic American
- Other

Q31. What is your yearly financial income?

- Less than $25,000 annually
- $25,000 to $49,999 annually
- $50,000 to $74,999 annually
- $75,000 to $99,000 annually
- $100,000 or more annually
- Do not know/Prefer not to answer

Q32. What is your father's highest level of education?

- Some High School
- High School Diploma
- Some College
- College (Undergraduate) Degree
- Some Graduate/Professional (Master's, Doctoral, Medical, Law, etc.)
- Graduate/Professional Degree (Master's, Doctoral, Medical, Law, etc.)

Q33. What is your mother's highest level of education?

- Some High School
- High School Diploma
- Some College
- College (Undergraduate) Degree
- Some Graduate/Professional (Master's Doctoral, Medical, Law, etc.)
- Graduate/Professional Degree (Master's, Doctoral, Medical, Law, etc.)

Q34. What is your approximate GPA?

- Under 1.9
- 2.0 to 2.4
- 2.5 to 2.9
- 3.0 to 3.4
- 3.5 to 4.0

Q35. Did you honestly read the paragraph at the beginning of the survey that addressed GMOs and what they are?

- Yes
- No

Thank you for taking the survey!

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El Discurso Social De La Homosexualidad Masculina En Dos Escritores Mexicanos

By Dra. Koldovike Yosune Ibarra Valenciana & Dr. Gustavo Herón Pérez Daniel
UACJ

EL Punto de Partida Social- Como estudiosos de lo social nos esforzamos siempre por comprender las formas de relacionarnos; tratamos de encontrar la comprensión en los fenómenos sociales que nos vinculan, los unos con los otros; aunque también, hoy en día, se vuelve trascendente la ingente necesidad de liberarse. Actualmente la necesidad ingente de transparentar las fuerzas coercitivas, que normalmente carentes de sentido, son destructivas y causan el sufrimiento a muchos individuos, fuerzas que permanentemente actúen como poderes que hoy nos dominan. Pareciera que la labor del sociólogo y del científico social, en la actualidad es comprender la naturaleza del poder para ayudar a dirigirlo de tal modo que su curso cobre menos vidas, cause menos estragos y sea menos absurdo. Nuestra labor se convierte entonces en una investigación, cuyas pautas de conceptualización se vinculan con las diferentes coacciones a las que son sometidas determinados sujetos.

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ELDISCURSOSOCIALDELAHOMOSEXUALIDADMASCULINAENDOSESCRITORESMEXICANOS

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

El Discurso Social De La Homosexualidad Masculina En Dos Escritores Mexicanos

Dra. Koldovike Yosune Ibarra Valenciana [α] & Dr. Gustavo Herón Pérez Daniel [σ]

"La historia positivista de la cultura concibe, pues, el lenguaje como algo que gradualmente se configura según los contornos del mundo físico. La historia romántica de la cultura ve el lenguaje como algo que gradualmente lleva el Espíritu a la autoconciencia. La historia nietzcheana de la cultura, y la filosofía dividsoniana del lenguaje, conciben el lenguaje tal como nosotros vemos ahora la evolución: como algo compuesto por nuevas formas de vida que constantemente eliminan a las formas antiguas, y no para cumplir un propósito más elevado, sino ciegamente."

-R. Rorty; *Contingencia, ironía y solidaridad*-

I. El Punto de Partida Social

Como estudiosos de lo social nos esforzamos siempre por comprender las formas de relacionarnos; tratamos de encontrar la comprensión en los fenómenos sociales que nos vinculan, los unos con los otros; aunque también, hoy en día, se vuelve trascendente la ingente necesidad de liberarse. Actualmente la necesidad ingente de transparentar las fuerzas coercitivas, que normalmente carentes de sentido, son destructivas y causan el sufrimiento a muchos individuos, fuerzas que permanentemente actúen como poderes que hoy nos dominan. Pareciera que la labor del sociólogo y del científico social, en la actualidad es comprender la naturaleza del poder para ayudar a dirigirlo de tal modo que su curso cobre menos vidas, cause menos estragos y sea menos absurdo. Nuestra labor se convierte entonces en una investigación, cuyas pautas de conceptualización se vinculan con las diferentes coacciones a las que son sometidas determinados sujetos. Nuestro egocentrismo académico y nuestra ingenuidad, intentan apartar el lenguaje y el pensamiento social orientado, para crear explicaciones y construir una comprensión social; ello se torna complejo pues muchos de los dispositivos de poder que hoy en día estudiamos, son dispositivos que nos atraviesan y nos prefiguran, tanto en lo social, como en el discurso[1].

De aquí se desprende uno de los primeros problemas al que cotidianamente intentamos dar respuesta: cómo construir un lenguaje coherente que permita nombrar las regularidades y las múltiples maneras del pensamiento en el que se expresan y se perciben los fenómenos sociales de hoy. El asunto de fondo, es cómo explicarle a los excluidos las figuraciones constituidas por nosotros mismos (desde nuestra ingenuidad científica), que supuestamente van a explicar-comprender-liberar las manifestaciones coercitivas que a su vez son sufridas como exclusión, tanto por ellos como por nosotros, tanto a nivel simbólico como discursivo. Vemos con cierta desconfianza que actualmente hay una gran transferencia de términos y conceptos, que de manera inicial fueron acuñados y diseñados, en los contextos (o burbujas) de la academia-ciencia social nativa (mexicana). Términos como género, feminicidio, homo-parental, transexual, equidad de género y varios más, que originalmente manifestaban o estaban enmarcados en proyectos académicos específicos, hoy en día se suman el pensamiento cotidiano, entre el pensamiento mágico-ficcional de los medios de comunicación y el léxico de expresión de curso corriente de la expresividad humana.

Al parecer como científicos sociales tenemos otra función más que cumplir: *es imperante ser guardianes de los términos sociológicos pertinentes*. Ello nos lleva a otra de las arenas de discusión académica que hoy día nos jalan a trabajar y a intentar investigar, que son las agendas académicas que buscan la liberación del pensar y del hablar; es el intento por sustituir o renombrar, poco a poco, las fenómenos sociales, tomando en cuenta su peculiaridad y su transformación. En ese punto nuestra labor, como científicos sociales mexicanos, nos obliga a pergeñar el camino de manera lo más clara posible, de tal suerte que lo que se trabaje sea pertinente y no cacofónico.

Tomando las reflexiones anteriores como punto de partida, nos hemos propuesto para este trabajo exponer el proceso (o el cambio) en la Literatura mexicana Contemporánea de la figura del personaje Homosexual masculino en al menos tres textos. Consideramos que nuestro corpus de textos enmarca y permite mostrar de manera muy clara los cambios de percepción social sobre los personajes homosexuales, al mismo tiempo que el refinamiento de los recursos estéticos y de los discursos sociales respectivos. Para este ensayo hemos elegido trabajar con novelas que perfilen personajes homosexuales masculinos y que en

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[1] Norbert Elias, *Sociología fundamental*, Editorial Gedisa, Madrid, 2008, pp. 13 y ss.

ello tengan un discurso de diferenciación en cada una. El corpus elegido está conformado por *Vereda del Norte* (1936), de José U. Escobar y*Fruta verde* (2006), de Enrique Serna.

El hablar de homosexualidad nos lleva repensar muchas cosas que damos por hecho; en principio la complejidad de la identidad sexual, pues esta se desplaza constantemente, tanto en los gestos, las formas de relacionarse que se van modificando según las circunstancias, la familia, las épocas, las caricias y los amores. La identidad sexual se construye desde la niñez y en la adolescencia. Cualquier adolescente tiene que aprender desde cero las reglas de amor, convivencia social y amistad, que muchas veces son consideradas peligrosas o prohibidas; la identidad homosexual se va constituyendo poco a poco, igual que la heterosexual; se ha llegado a decir, no sin cierta polémica, que la subjetividad homosexual es distinta, algo que sin duda ya resultaría difícil de sostener[2].

La homosexualidad masculina y la femenina difieren, aunque en los últimos años de luchas sociales se hayan sumado, son diferentes todavía en muchos aspectos centrales. La misma identidad homosexual tiene apenas casi 200 años. M. Foucault ha dicho que antes del siglo XIX había actos homosexuales, más no "personas" homosexuales. La identidad homosexual es un fenómeno contemporáneo. Ello se explica porque en los últimos dos siglos los Estados penalizaron la homosexualidad y los médicos la patologizaron; lo que a su vez permitió la paulatina asociación de homosexuales y su conversión en comunidad (cultura) con el paso del tiempo. De manera ya muy reciente, últimos 30 años, se ha pensado considerar la homosexualidad como una minoría oprimida, que debe tener los mismos derechos que la mayoría y poder mantener su identidad cultural propia. Ya de manera muy reciente se ha postulado que muchas de las categorías que basan su diferenciación en la sexualidad, el cuerpo o en el género, son de carácter represivo, por lo que también deben ser eliminadas[3].

Si se sitúa al sexo en las condiciones sociohistóricas que lo producen, pero pensado como elemento dicotómico (hombre- mujer, heterosexual-homosexual) marcado por una construcción social, cuya tendencia real-dominante es hacia la heterosexualidad obligatoria, ello nos lleva a escenarios de reflexión diversos. Se dice entonces que el acceso directo a la noción de cuerpo, ya no es factible puesto que hay toda una serie de imaginarios sociales y culturales, cuyos códigos se cifran en la interpretación de los discursos, prácticas y normas con una raíz heteropatriarcal[4].

Para pensar estos temas de una nueva manera, se habla de que hay criticar tanto la noción de sexo, como de género y de preferencia sexual, retomando la noción de "performatividad de género", como una manera de explicar esa "naturalización artificial" a la que se enfrentan cotidianamente los sujetos tanto cuando se habla de sexo como de sexualidad. Se hace evidente entonces la necesidad de describir críticamente la coreografía social de la sexualidad cotidiana, con sus actuaciones reiteradas y las normas sociales que exceden a los sujetos. Se entiende que la identidad no es algo que se pone como un disfraz, sino más bien, es una acción repetida cotidianamente, que va construyendo y reafirmando una forma de ser específica[5].

Ahora también, junto con la descripción crítica de la sexualidad cotidiana, se hace necesario repensar el amor y sus estructuras discursivas de poder en el mundo contemporáneo:

> *El nexo naturalizado del discurso amoroso con el heterosexismo va de la mano con la invisibilización y el silencio social, cultural (simbólico) y político en Occidente del fenómeno amoroso entre personas del mismo sexo biológico (ni qué decir de la posibilidad de amar indistintamente a hombres y mujeres). Esta falta de visualización es inocua: es parte de la tecnología de poder homofóbica que corre pareja con la construcción misma de la homosexualidad como identidad radicada en el sexo. Desde las tecnologías de poder modernas, la homosexualidad se configura con relación a su sexo, no en relación con su dimensión amorosa. Esta reducción de la homosexualidad a la práctica sexual ha sido una de las tenazas centrales de las ideologías patriarcales, una tenaza invisible.*[6]

De este modo la homosexualidad pasa por una especie de política del uso del cuerpo, en la que se prescriben las prácticas amorosas homosexuales más comunes, y se vuelven sospechosas. Dado que el cuerpo heterosexual es pensado para la reproducción, el cuerpo homosexual es pensado sólo para el placer. Se da un proceso que se ha llamado de "metonimización de los hombres y las mujeres homosexuales", como parte de varios mecanismos de ocultamiento social de la homosexualidad[7].

La homosexualidad puede ser entendida también como forma de fortalecer al heterosexual, al otro; al situar al otro como "depravado o débil", la identidad heterosexual masculina se muestra a sí

[2] Marina Castañeda, *La experiencia homosexual. Para comprender la homosexualidad desde dentro y desde fuera,* Editorial Paidós, México, 2011, p. 24 y ss

[3] Fernando R. Lanuza y Raúl M. Carrasco, comps., *Queer y cuir. Políticas de lo irreal,* Editorial Fontamara-Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, México, 2015.

[4] Sayak Valencia, *"Del queer al cuir: ostranénie geopolítica y epistémica del sur glocal",* aparecido en Lanuza y Carrasco, op. cit., pp. 19-37

[5] udith Butler, *El género en disputa. El feminismo y la subversión de la identidad,* Paidós-UNAM, México, 2001, p. 113 y ss.

[6] Guillermo Núñez Noriega, *¿Qué es la diversidad sexual?*, Ariel-UNAM-CIAD, México, 2016, pp. 78-79.

[7] Núñez, op. cit., p. 83 y ss.

misma como "sana y fuerte"; se dice entonces que la dicotomía homosexual-heterosexual, contribuye en gran manera a la estabilización del sistema heteropatriarcal dominante. La homosexualidad difícilmente es definida por sí misma, siempre es un reflejo de algo hetersosexual, en un gran contexto de homofobia. Lo que lleva a pensar, desde el erotismo abierto y flexible, desde una nueva construcción de identidades eróticas, la posibilidad hablar de personas son "homoflexibles, heteroflexibles o heterodisidentes", y con ello tener nuevas herramientas descriptivas[8].

Como el interés del presente ensayo es analizar los discursos literarios y su vínculo con la homosexualidad masculina, nos hemos querido valer de la noción de Discurso Social; el discurso social es una forma del decir que ya se encuentra fijada en los textos literarios; estos textos suelen ser respuesta a algo. Lo hemos visto como un conjunto de elementos narrativos y argumentativos. La originalidad de los textos trabajados, también sus paradojas, están inscritas en referencia a los elementos dominantes propios del discurso sobre la Homosexualidad.

Los textos confirman la dominancia, aun cuando intenten tomar distancia de ella. Pareciera que los tres autores son muy diferentes en cuanto a su visión de la homosexualidad; uno con ingenuidad aparente; otro con la malicie de la ironía; otro con la crudeza y la angustia palpitante. Todos fundamentalmente compatibles con el sistema de homofobia preestablecida. Como apunta Marc Angenot:

> *Tanto en el campo literario como en la política, muchas de las aparentes innovaciones, son si se las examina con detenimiento, retornos de lo olvidado, incluso de lo rechazado, o la reivindicación de formas arcaicas, "reconfiguradas" para hacer que parezcan nuevas, en suma, manera de responder a la coyuntura cuestionando ciertas dominantes, pero sin avanzar más allá de ellas. Por eso los contemporáneos se encuentran constantemente frente a señuelos que se les presentan como algo inusitado y nuevo. Quien pretenda "juzgar su tiempo" y percibir las tendencias de la época debe tratar de discriminar entre estos señuelos, esas reposiciones al gusto del momento, y la crítica "verdadera".*[9]

El Discurso Social, por tanto en nuestro estudio implica conocer aquello que se escribe en un estado de sociedad dado; es aquello que se pone en el discurso, en nuestro caso de la Literatura, pero que forma un conjunto de tópicos, de encadenamiento de enunciados, que en una sociedad dada organizan lo decible, lo narrable, asegurando la división del trabajo discursivo. Estas formas discursivas pueden ser susceptibles de ser conocidas tanto mediante la observación analítica, como en sus formas de producción. Entonces, hablar de discurso social es abordar los discursos como hechos sociales; se trata de extrapolar las manifestaciones individuales, aquello que es un vector de las fuerzas sociales, y que en el plano de la observación se convierte en regularidad, en algo digno de ser comentado y analizado. El discurso social puede entenderse como algo que "ya está allí", en la Literatura, pero que también "in-forma" cada enunciado particular, confiriéndole una inteligibilidad analítica[10].

Para el presente trabajo nos hemos propuesto perfilar los discursos sociales vinculados a la homosexualidad, en los tres autores elegidos, con interés en mostrar la disparidad y la peculiaridad de cada una de las narrativas. Cada una, perteneciente a momentos diferentes, plantean literariamente formas diversas del discurso social homosexual masculino.

II. Homoerotismo Y Revolución

De manera sorprendente comenzamos este recuento de la literatura sobre homosexuales, en Cd. Juárez, Chih, con la novela *Vereda del norte,* publicada en 1937 cuando se escribió en partes, dentro del *Suplemento Cultural Armario,* la primera novela que veladamente hablaba de una relación entre dos muchachos, aparentemente de homosexualidad masculina, aunque solamente lo describe como un amor trágico. A diferencia de las otras obras elegidas, esta novela se enmarca en tiempos de la Revolución Mexicana en una de las poblaciones Mineras de Parral, Chihuahua; también se mencionan muy de pasada la capital del Estado, Chihuahua y Cd. Juárez, donde se lleva a cabo el desenlace. La descubridora de este texto fue Adriana Candia, para quien considera el hallazgo como algo único:

> *Posiblemente la primera novela mexicana con tema homosexual, y la primera novela juarense de la revolución.* Vereda del norte, *narra sobre todo las vicisitudes emocionales entre Ricardo García, adolescente del pueblo minero de San Francisquito del Oro, Parral Chihuahua, y el campesino Teófilo Domínguez; en una época en la que se difunden las ideas de cambio en el norte del país y el pueblo es alcanzado por el estallido de la revolución. Por ello la novela también describe a la sociedad campirana del norte, con sus personajes y situaciones peculiares y la forma en que el movimiento sociopolítico vino a trastocar la vida de los hombres de Chihuahua.*[11]

Generalmente se acepta[12] que la novela de la Revolución posee algunas características generales

[8] Idem.

[9] Marc Angenot, *El Discurso Social. Los límites históricos de lo pensable y de lo decible,* Editorial Siglo XXI, Buenos Aires, 2010, p. 63.

[10] Angenot, op. cit., p. 22 y ss.

[11] Adriana Candia, compilación y análisis, presenta José Escobar, *El evangelio de Judas de Keryothe. Vereda del norte,* Gobierno Municipal de Cd. Juárez, Cd. Juárez, 2005, pp. 81 y ss.

[12] Rafael Torres Sánchez, "La vida cotidiana en la narrativa de la Revolución", aparecido en Álvaro Ochoa Serrano, comp., *Escritores y escritos de la revolufia,* El Colegio de Michoacán, México, 2004, pp. 41-58.

comunes: 1) Predominio del naturalismo realista; 2) Se intenta mediante el discurso literario, no la composición de idealizaciones, que puedan ayudar al lector a sobrellevar la monotonía cotidiana, sino de enfrentar al lector a la realidad, sin más adjetivos ni misterios; 3) Se le suma entonces el carácter testimonial de los textos y la forma narrativa como dominante en cuanto a género de expresión. Los contemporáneos geográficos (Chihuahua durante la década de 1930), de *Verada norte*, que pudieran haber perfilado su estilo y forma de narrar la vida cotidiana (pero no sucede así) son: Martín Luis Guzman, Nellie Campobello y Rafael M. Muñoz, tres autores de ascendencia chihuahuense novelistas de la revolución, pero que no afectan el estilo de Escobar. Es claro que Escobar, como un autor que publicaba en un diario fronterizo, no necesariamente fuera considerado, por la crítica literaria centralista, como otro escritor-novelista de la Revolución Mexicana. De ahí el interés que pudiera suscitar el hablar un poco más de esta obra recién descubierta.

La novela podría leerse muy bien bajo la clave de una novela de iniciación o de búsqueda de identidad sexual, aunque también laboral; la trama cuenta la historia de Ricardo García, protagonista central que vive en un pueblito de Chihuahua junto a su papá, su mamá y su hermana. La angustia y el cambio en su vida comienzan cuando aparece en su vida la necesidad económica de trabajar. A la par, el texto nos cuenta el trance de Ricardo de la niñez a la adolescencia, con claras insinuaciones hacia el amor homosexual al descubrir la amistad de Teófilo Domínguez, quien al parecer lo seduce y lo enamora. Como en el naturalismo realista, la angustia del protagonista por su amistad con Teófilo, se transmite al paisaje oscuro, prohibido. En una de las primeras descripciones se nos deja entrever el vínculo angustiante entre el espacio y el sentir del protagonista, cuando Ricardo acompaña a su papá a la mina:

> *¡Qué idea: la tierra perforada de lado a lado! Pero no. Pronto llegaban al fondo. Ahí se ramificaban los túneles. Era un mundo de fantasía. La densidad atmosférica enguantaba los cuerpos. La columna de tinieblas caía verticalmente, enterrándolos en las entrañas de la tierra. El muchacho sentía la presencia, casi sexual, del secreto de la montaña. Era una atracción lóbrega.*[13]

Tanto la atracción como el sentimiento sexual inspirado por la montaña, llenaban el ambiente de cierta atracción y necesidad homoerótica. Aunque en el texto no apareciera, todavía, el amante. El texto apuntala las llaves para comprender el espacio, no como un elemento neutro y amorfo, sino como un proceso de iconización o espacialización del significado del relato[14]. Los vínculos del espacio con el protagonista se van haciendo cada vez más significativos en cuanto a la líbido homosexual del protagonista:

> *Sentía un deseo intenso de tumbarse en la tierra, de restregarse como reptil, sobre el fondo del túnel. El tacto es el sentido de la tierra. El secreto de Isis. Por supuesto que Ricardito nada sabía de los misterios egipcios, pero se dejaba poseer, inconscientemente, por el deseo de acariciar la tierra, de sentirla en todo el cuerpo, de palpar las entrañas del gran subterráneo. Sentía después la presencia de la gran soledad. Lo llenaba la euforia acercarse a los hombres, darse cuenta de que todavía estaba junto a la humanidad.*[15]

El deseo homoerótico del protagonista va aumentando según se adentra en la mina; la tierra se convierte en un catalizador sexual importante. Inclusive, hacia el final del capítulo 1 se dice que los mineros parecían hechos de tierra. Al protagonista le gusta sentir, restregarse, palpar y acariciar la tierra. Aunque finalmente la cercanía de los hombres-mineros es otro indicio de atracción inminente. El texto juega con la oscuridad de la mina y otorga la luz a los hombres

> *Parecía que los mineros flotaban, ingrávidos, en una ola de negrura, en donde bailaban, formando extrañas constelaciones, las llamitas de las linternas. Debajo de cada punto luminoso brillaban dos ojos; el sudor de las frentes relumbraba con resplandores anaranjados; los dientes blancos relampagueaban detrás de las bocas fatigadas. Los hombres, desnudos de medio cuerpo arriba, ya no parecían hombres, el sudor les formaba caminitos sobre los torsos hercúleos cubiertos de polvo.*[16]

La desnudez y la oscuridad se tornan elementos también indiciales de la atracción del protagonista por los hombres; hacia el final de este capítulo 1, llega a decir que a los mineros les gustaba Ricardito, pues *"tenía la luz en la risa y en el cabello. Parecía un dios arrancado de los frisios griegos. Un dios con huarachitos y calabacito para el agua; Ganímides vestido de manta[17]"*. Justamente Ganímides, era un muchacho tan bello que fue raptado por Zeus para su deleite; el nombre es todavía uno de los sinónimos y mitos vinculados a la homoerotismo.

En la vereda del norte del pueblo, como se llama la novela tiene lugar el encuentro de los dos amantes. En el capítulo 4, en el momento en que se conocen los dos muchachos, el paisaje vuelve a tomar significatividad, pues la oscuridad de la noche obliga a Ricardo a tener miedo y desconfiar de Teófilo; aunque el diálogo se vuelve también indicio de homoerotismo:

[13] José Escobar, *Vereda del Norte,* p. 108.

[14] Luz Aurora Pimentel, *El relato en perspectiva. Estudio de la teoría narrativa,* Editorial Siglo XXI, México, 2002, pp. 25-41.

[15] Escobar, idem.

[16] Idem.

[17] Escobedo, op. cit., p. 110.

Otra vez el silencio. El muchacho quisiera encontrar algo de qué hablar, pero nada se le ocurre.

– *¿Por qué tiene miedo? Valedor.*
– *¿Yo?*
– *¿Pos quién? Es que cree que voy a perjudicarlo, pero nada hay de eso. No se arruge, yo vivo allá, en aquella milpa que negrea en la ladera. Friega mucho estar solo. Todos los días miro la mesma sierra y los mesmos árboles. ¡Y con la boca de palo!*
– *¿Por qué no baja al pueblo?*
– *Porque- y permanece pensativo, como buscando la causa – no me cuadra ese pueblo. ¿Se fuma un macuchi?*
– *No me gusta.*
– *¡A poco no chupa! ¿O no quiere fumar conmigo?*
– *No, de veras, una vez chupé un cigarro y por poco y echo los hígados.*
– *Pos yo, con su permiso. ¡A ver si luego se le antoja! Dicen que de ver dan ganas, -comenta, mientras lía pausadamente el tabaco negro en una hoja de maíz.*[18]

La escena se torna homoerótica, pues el texto vuelve a poner sobre la mesa la necesidad de vincularse entre hombres; no solamente apelando a la soledad, sino al gusto por "chupar" y "antojarse". El texto describe el cortejo de Teófilo sobre Ricardo, pues el primero lo invita y le regala (una baraja, melones y sandías), cosas, para ver si Ricardo acepta seguirse viendo en el cerro en secreto. Ambos muy contentos acuerdan una cita, para "mirarse"; Teófilo le hace prometer a Ricardo que volverán a verse una semana después. En seguida de conocerse, ya en su casa, Ricardo empieza a suspirar por Teófilo, y se siente "inquieto, revuelto y desparramado"[19]. Y el canto que escucha le recuerda a Teófilo, unos versillos:

Nací en la cima de una montaña,
Librando el rayo devastador;
Crecí en el fondo de una cabaña,
Y hoy que soy hombre, muero de amor.[20]

Ante la angustia de la cercanía de la cita, la agonía del enamorado se desdobla al pensar los pros y los contras de asistir a la cita. Ricardo se duerme cantando la canción de amor y sueña con Teófilo. En el sueño Ricardo cae a la mina y Teófilo llega a rescatarlo, y se erotiza el ambiente de nuevo:

(…) llega entonces el desconocido, pero ahora viene sonriendo cariñoso, lo toma en los brazos y lo saca del subterráneo, se alongan los muchachos tomados de la mano, por una vereda muy larga, en la diafanidad del cielo es el sol, escala el paredón cobalto del firmamento, como una gran telaraña de cristal.[21]

En realidad, en uno de los momentos culminantes de la novela, cuando en la sierra se desbordaba una tormenta, Ricardo decide pasar la noche en la cabaña de Teófilo. En el texto se pone el énfasis en las fuerzas externas de la naturaleza, pero se remata el texto con una caricia de Teófilo sobre Ricardo. El texto simboliza mucho, pues a partir de ese hecho el tiempo de la novela se acorta y se comienzan a vivir los acontecimientos cada vez más rápidos:

¡Qué vale la vida! ¡Qué vale la fuerza de los hombres ante la furia de la naturaleza! Son dos pobres seres insignificantes, abandonados en la noche profunda, sombra entre sombras, a quienes solamente queda el sentimiento de la confianza, el encuentro de un espíritu que sabe que hay otro espíritu, el consuelo borroso del calor humano en medio de la gran soledad. Se sienten empequeñecidos, anonadados, uno junto del otro, en medio de las montañas llenas de enigmas, y de fuerzas cósmicas desencadenadas. Calor de humanidad. Presencia inefable de otro ser humano. Teófilo pasó la mano sobre los cabellos de su compañero. –Sacristán, Sacristancito ¿de veras eres mi amigo?[22]

Poco después de este encuentro, llegan las noticias de la Revolución al pueblo. Tanto el papá de Ricardo como Teófilo deciden seguir la Revolución y abandonar el pueblo. Ricardo se queda y recibe con angustia la noticia de la muerte de su papá en el frente de batalla. Tanto su madre, su hermana y él deciden irse a vivir a Chihuahua con unos parientes, debido a la falta de trabajo y de ingresos; después prefieren viajar a Cd. Juárez, donde por la cercanía con Estados Unidos les facilitaría la existencia para trabajar. Es ahí donde Ricardo escucha que han apresado a Teófilo y presencia su fusilamiento, con lágrimas y gritos. Abruptamente la novela termina después de la muerte de Teófilo, que mira tiernamente a Ricardo al morir.

Se enmarca la novela como de la Revolución, pues cuenta, como ya se decía de elementos de la problemática de la posesión de la tierra, la pobreza de la gente en la sierra y la injusticia de la vida del minero. La presencia del libro *Sucesión Presidencial* en el pueblo, se marca como el inicio de la Revolución; no narra ningún hecho de armas salvo, la noticia de la derrota de Orozco (donde murió el papá de Ricardo) y el fusilamiento de Teófilo. Las mujeres son descritas pobremente y casi en todas en sentido negativo; se llega al extremo de no dar el nombre de la hermana de Ricardo. De igual forma el tipo de narrador homodiegético[23], o como ausente, es decir que para crear una ilusión de realidad, el narrador hablaba de manera muy diferente a los personajes. Los personajes utilizaban arcaísmos y tonos populares; mientras que el narrador hacia referencias a la biblia, a la literatura griega, al latín o la cultura inglesa.

[18] Escobedo, op. cit., p. 132
[19] Escobar, op. cit., p. 135.
[20] Escobar, op. cit., p. 136.
[21] Escobar, op. cit., p. 138.
[22] Escobar, op. cit., p. 164.
[23] Pimentel, op. cit., p. 142.

El título de la novela *Vereda del norte*, es el nombre del lugar donde se conocieron Ricardo y Teófilo. Pero también da pie a la reflexión de las implicaciones de que, por la Revolución, los personajes deciden irse al norte, es decir trasladarse de vivir en Parral (al sur de Chihuahua) a irse a vivir a Cd. Juárez, en la frontera norte. Abiertamente no se menciona pero de igual forma es una crítica velada al villismo revolucionario y a la miseria que generó hacia aquellos que no lo siguieron; una crítica difícil de escuchar bajo la figura del caudillo parralense, a quien hoy en día se sigue alabando. Por eso la importancia que cobra Cd. Juárez, lugar donde tiene el desenlace fatal del relato. Adriana Candia, señala que se puede rastrear la novela con lo sucedido en enero de 1916 en Ciudad Juárez, cuando existían grandes tensiones entre norteamericanos y villistas, tensiones que se materializaron cuando los hermanos Durán, Bernardo y Teodoro, fueron fusilados de forma idéntica a la novela. Las coincidencias son signo de que había un trasfondo real en el relato de Escobar[24].

III. LA Parte de Serna: UNA Novela Gay

La segunda novela del corpus es *Fruta verde* de Enrique Serna; una novela histórica engañosa, pues narra la Cd. de México de finales de 1970 y principios de 1980, pero también tiene los elementos de novela de iniciación, pues su protagonista es un joven escritor (*la fruta verde*) que se encuentra con un grupo de homosexuales "cultos" que le ayudan a perfilarse en el mundo literario y sexual. La novela posee muchos elementos magistrales, pues logra aportarle a la reflexión literaria, la complejidad de la pertinencia social, laboral y el mundo sexual tan ambiguos en esa época y en la nuestra. Germán, el protagonista siempre tiene seguro sus juicios y su parecer, tanto de la filosofía marxista, como de la ética sexual y familiar. Los errores de los personajes son los errores propios de la época. Aparecen ponderadas las ideas marxistas y las obras importantes de finales de la década de 1970: Vargas Llosa, Juan Salvador Gaviota y Oscar Wilde, entre varias más. También se describe el mundo del teatro lumpe y del cotilleo homosexual de época; también se comentan películas e inteligencias necesarias.

La tensión que genera al describir la familia del protagonista es bastante realista: una mujer divorciada de clase media alta (en la ficción se presenta como media baja), Paula, pero por su accionar cultural, festivo y referencial, parece ser una mujer de clase alta venida a menos. Las constantes fiestas-reuniones, el alcohol y la familia extendida, dejan entrever universos expandibles y complejos; pero también dan elementos a la forma de narrar la novela: pareciera una obra de teatro, donde los escenarios cambian, pero los 3 personajes centrales (Germán, Paula y Mauro) se mantienen en su coherencia y drama. El personaje más real-magistral, y tercer contrapeso de la novela es Mauro, el escritor de teatro abiertamente homosexual, que logrará el amor del protagonista y al mismo tiempo representará la complejidad de la vida homosexual y literaria. Mauro sufre y hace sufrir al protagonista desde el inicio hasta el final de la novela; pero también le ofrece placer, seguridad y autoconciencia creativa y sexual. Esta contradicción lo convierte, sin querer, en el centro real de la trama de la novela; pues la novela termina justamente al morir Mauro.

La novela está plagada de homoerotismo y de descripciones de la vida gay de ayer y hoy. En diversas partes del texto novelado, se muestra con gran afán la importancia de ser gay y cómo se vive ante los demás gays y ante la sociedad. Las descripciones lúbricas de la vida homoerótica hacen desaparecer fácilmente la falsa lectura de una provocación bisexual. Aunque el protagonista intente discursivamente convencerse y convencer al lector de la "libertad" de la bisexualidad; esta aparece desdibujada y casi inconexa. En cambio, el homoerotismo describe diversas fantasías lúbricas: el sexo oral, la penetración anal y el cachondeo son descritos con ritmo y continuidad. Por otro lado, la heterosexualidad es prácticamente abolida y menospreciada, lo mismo que la artificial "bisexualidad".

También las mujeres descritas en la novela, si bien en la figura de Paula, se tornan centro de consideraciones, la mayoría están atadas a la moral, a la falta de ella o a la estupidez; ello cierra el panorama de los personajes femeninos a universos cada vez más concéntricos. Se nos presenta a Paula atrapada por su moral, aún sobre su propia felicidad sexual y sobre el romanticismo de su relación con Pável. La moral incluía vehículos individuales como sus hijos, su círculo de amigas-fiesteras y el retrato monologante de su madre. Sus arenas de lucha moralizante le llevaron a condenar a Kimberly (una de las únicas mujeres que gozaron del heterosexo en la novela); también a Pável, por su intención de seducirla; y a su primo español Baldomero, quien gustaba de los tríos amorosos. Con cada uno de ellos, al enfrentarlos, parecía renunciar, uno a uno, de los placeres que la vida sexual le concedía; tanto que al final, moriría de manera dolorosa y mártir.

Si pensáramos que la categoría de "literatura gay", coincide con la aparición pública del movimiento de Liberación Lésbico-Gay en México[25], más o menos encontraríamos una cierta simetría. Justamente hacia finales de la década de 1970, aparece las primeras

[24] Candia, op. cit., p.101.

[25] Jordi Diez, *"La trayectoria política del movimiento Lésbico-Gay en México"* aparecido en Estudios Sociológicos, vol. XXIX, núm. 86, El Colegio de México, México, Mayo-agosto 2011, pp. 687-712.

novelas de temática gay (abierta y explícitamente que hablaran de la homosexualidad masculina); durante la década de 1970 y 1980, con autores como José Ceballos Maldonado, Luis Zapata y José Joaquín Blanco, la narrativa gay fue mostrando cada vez con más osadía sus temas y referencias[26]. En realidad pareciera que en esa época, fue el público literario se segmentó y la producción literaria también lo hizo:

> *La literatura de Onda y la Narrativa del desierto no pasó der ser un hallazgo de la crítica. En cambio se desarrollaron individualidades y excepciones. Lo que sí proliferó fue la narrativa de nicho: un buen ejemplo fue la narrativa gay. Luis Zapata publicó en 1979 un instantáneo clásico del género:* El vampiro de la colonia Roma. *Narración del sórdido mundo de los chichifos a través de la técnica casi antropológica que le debía por igual sus recursos al Ricardo Garibay de* Las glorias del gran Púas, *por cierto publicado casi simultáneamente, y al Oscar Lewis de* Los Hijos de Sánchez. *Si bien en el momento de su aparición y a pesar de los elogios de la crítica y la buena recepción de los lectores, la novela parecía ser más un síntoma que el inicio de una obra. Zapata ha desarrollado una interesante saga narrativa en la que se pasan por la criba los referentes de la homosexualidad, pero también sus mitos y sentimentalidad, y ha conseguido ir más allá de eso hasta abandonar, tanto la condición de síntoma como la estrechez de un género o su militancia.*[27]

Por ello *Fruta verde* ya no es una novela de avanzada gay, pues pertenece a 2006, sino más bien presenta, al estilo de su autor, una simulación de novela histórica, que como ya se había mencionado, pretende simular un diario y un narrador omnisciente, que conjuntamente nos van narrando las peripecias de los tres personajes. Uno de los puntos cruciales de la novela es la narración en primera persona de la primera experiencia homoerótica del protagonista Germán. Mientras escuchaban a solas la canción "Fruta verde", proveniente de un tocadiscos, el personaje de Germán concede, con Mauro su seductor maestro literato gay, a tener su primera relación homoerótica:

> *Yo tengo la culpa de que tú seas mala, boca de chavala que yo enseñé a besar, cantaba Ana María González en la cúspide del frenesí, cuando de pronto Mauro lanzó un sorpresivo asalto a mi verga con la rapidez de una cobra. No, por Dios, alcancé a protestar, pero una erección categórica le restó autoridad a mi queja. Caliente y asustado a la vez, intenté una débil y tardía resistencia verbal desmentida por mi quietud. Durante los breves instantes en que Mauro me sacó el pito de la bragueta y se lo metió en la boca, debo de haber repetido quince veces la palabra no y en todo momento mi negativa quería decir sí. Mauro es un mamador excelso, que domina a la perfección el arte de chupar sin morder el glande, y gracias a su destreza bucal la intensidad del placer ahogó mis protestas.*[28]

En el centro de la novela y de la narración están los puntos de vista de Germán, que hacen que la novela no necesariamente presente una apología del homoerotismo, sino que más bien una racionalidad del disfrute homosexual virginal. Lo que veladamente lleva, también a lo que ya decíamos con Núñez sobre el erotismo homosexual y la metonimia, pues para salir del paso Germán compara su experiencia con la heterosexual:

> *De camino a casa, espabilado por las corrientes de aire, traté de ver el lado bueno de las cosas. Quería mucho a Mauro y nadie en el mundo me alegraba la vida tanto como él. Yo no lo deseaba, por supuesto, ni creía que a partir de ahora me gustaran los hombres. La orientación sexual no cambia por arte de magia y la fealdad de Mauro era casi una vacuna contra la lujuria. Pero como tantas mujeres guapas conquistadas por feos encantadores, yo había tenido la gentileza de regalarle mi cuerpo en recompensa por su largo y devoto cortejo*[29].

Al igual que muchas novelas mexicanas y latinoamericanas, donde los amores son siempre interrumpidos y fragmentados, también el amor gay de Enrique Serna, termina aceptando el cliché del homosexual masculino trágico. Al final de la novela la muerte de Mauro, una vejez sin amor, en la soledad del triunfo profesional, tiene un tufo de derrota existencial-juicio, más que una reivindicación o una reflexión sobre la posible realidad de un gay de más 50 años. En cambio el final de la novela intenta convencernos que Germán no era gay y hasta precisa que el mismo Mauro acepte y "dejer ir" a Germán y su posibilidad de ser gay:

– *Cuando Germán llegó a la oficina, ¿qué fue lo que más te gustó de él?*
– *Sus piernas, por supuesto.*
– *Me refiero a su personalidad.*
– *Bueno, me gustaba su encanto masculino, su virilidad espontánea y sencilla.*
– *¿Y te gustaría que siga siendo así?*
– *Claro, yo no le quiero cambiar el carácter.*
– *Pero te molesta que no se asuma como gay ¿no es cierto?*
– *Sí, claro.*
– *Pues ahí está tu contradicción – la Chiquis le clavó una mirada astuta-. ¿Acaso no quieres transformar a ese noble muchacho en jotito?*
– *No, Dios me libre. Sólo quiero sacarlo de su laberinto.*
– *¿Y quién lo metió en él? Me consta que ese niño estaba muy tranquilo antes de conocerte.*
– *Ay Chuiquis, no te pongas otra vez en el papel de madre superiora. ¿Me vas a acusar de pervertidor?*

[26] Angélica Tornero, *"Literatura homosexual"*, aparecido en Armando Pereira coord., *Diccionario de la Literatura Mexicana del siglo XX*, UNAM, México, 2000, p. 206-208.

[27] José María Espinasa, *Historia mínima de la Literatura mexicana del siglo XX*, El Colegio de México, México, 2015, pp.301-302.

[28] Serna, op. cit., p. 218.

[29] Serna, op. cit., p. 219.

– *No, pero si andas por la vida seduciendo bugas, con todos los riesgos que implica, debes atenderte a las consecuencias, en vez de andar llorando por los rincones como la pobre muñeca fea. Cuando yo me ligo aun tipo en una cantina no me importa si tiene novia o esposa. Es más, lo prefiero.*
– *Pero tú sólo buscas un acostón.*
– *¿Y tú qué quieres con Germán? ¿Un matrimonio para toda la vida? – se carcajeó la Chiquis-. No seas ridícula, por favor. Para aventureras como nosotras, la estabilidad no existe. Así que si Germán se ha extraviado en su laberinto, por lo menos ten la honradez de perderte con él.*

El diálogo y el narrador omnisciente que sigue a Mauro, nos explican continuamente que Germán no es gay, sino bisexual, con lo que la posibilidad de una relación de largo aliento con Mauro, queda cortada de tajo. La trama de amor que la novela hábilmente trazó, las diferentes vicisitudes del sentimiento homoerótico que se mostraron tan gráficamente, la vida refinada y culta de los gay, son acotadas y cerradas para el final acelerado de la novela. En el último capítulo, "Ofrenda", el tiempo se aceleró de pasar de narrarnos el paso de pocos días a narrarnos décadas en unas cuantas líneas.

IV. Excurso Final Hacia Del Discurso Social

La apuesta inicial cuando comenzamos a escribir este ensayo se vinculaba con sacar a luz la interdiscursividad generada en los textos literarios elegidos; se intentó volver a poner en evidencia los elementos de la homosexualidad masculina como temática de los espacios sublimes de la literatura. Nos hemos valido de la noción de discurso social, para generar una reflexión social sobre la Literatura Contemporánea de México. Se ha pretendido que la interpretación del campo literario, en nuestro caso de la Literatura que presentaba el decir sobre la Homosexualidad masculina como vida social, al mismo tiempo nos dibuja una serie de estrategias discursivas propias de los enunciados literarios y que operan según el reconocimiento de los diversos tópicos de la lectura.

De las tres novelas del corpus, *Fruta verde* la única que abiertamente decide hablar de la vida homosexual en múltiples caras, arenas, personajes y formas. Ello nos lleva a una reflexión más profunda. Atravesando el corpus, se puede decir que la primera novela, la de Escobedo como parte de la narrativa de la Revolución, apenas dibuja tímidamente un homoerotismo. Mientras que la segunda, la de Serna, nos hace ver ya un cambio hacia la conformación de una descripción incompleta de las formas de vida de la cultura gay.

En *Vereda del Norte* la distancia del narrador en tercera persona nos permite ver el romance y el homoerotismo revolucionario; sus personajes apenas alcanzan a ser perfilados como masas sincrónicas pegadas al momento revolucionario. Al texto se van superponiendo vagamente, rumores de lo que puede haber sido la Revolución Mexicana en Chihuahua, pero sin remanentes que explique el comportamiento social. La pobreza económica es asumida por los personajes, y con ella, son arrastrados a vivir y morir sin cuestionar el modelo político o económico. La naturaleza hermosa y bondadoza, que acompañaba al amor de los dos muchachos en la primera mitad de la novela, hacia el final desaparece y se desdibuja. Así, los campos discursivos, que nos explican que hacia el norte la Revolución y la muerte van en aumento. Tanto que el amor y la novela terminan de manera violenta y dejamos de saber sobre que sucedió después con Ricardo.

En *Fruta verde,* el ámbito de la ideología coincide con el de los signos: ahí donde hay cultura gay, en la Ciudad de México de finales de de 1970, se encuentran los signos que le deben de acompañar. Todo puede identificarse allí, desde los enunciados hasta los personajes centrales. Todo lleva la marca de una época y de un signo sexual; la gnoseología subyacente en forma de significante lleva la marca de las formas de conocer y de representar la conocida forma de vida del teatro lumpe y gay de la década de 1980. No se necesita muchos argumentos, pues la apuesta por una novela histórica hace que los discursos de los personajes se vuelvan parte de la topología de los discursos de la época. Todo se dice y se hace en un escenario donde la realidad social se realiza y se altera, mediante modelos y constructos, ahí donde hay literatura acumulada. Cada momento se ve apoyado por las paradojas temporales, como una especie de doxa que desarrolla la masa de los discursos, divergentes y antagónicos, engendrando un decible de la época y gozando con los anacronismos propios de lo no-dicho. La memoria de los personajes y sus discursos, a veces caen en lo quimérico, como cuando Paula sueña "que el mundo volviera a ser cursi", permiten entrever los intereses que se sostienen en la enunciación de lo impensable: los gays viviendo felices para siempre; las mujeres divorciadas que encuentran el amor y la pasión extraviados; la virginidad erótica eterna, siempre abierta y fluctuante.

Vemos, hacia el final, como reflexión del corpus elegido, que la homosexualidad masculina es parte de una sociedad dada, y se objetiva en los textos trabajados. No podemos decir que es un mecanismo de dominio que abarca al arte, a una cultura o una época; sino que nos remitimos a constatar la semantización de los usos y las significaciones inmanentes de las diversa prácticas textuales que movilizan los signos de la sociedad mexicana; aún queda por descifrar la hegemonía discursiva de cada época y en cada momento de nuestro pasado-presente continuos.

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Supply Chain Effectiveness of Clothing Manufacturing Company in Bangladesh

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Abstract- Supply chain management (SCM) is the essential management philosophy and practice of materials, information, and finances where processes flow from supplier to manufacturer to wholesaler to retailer to consumer. This investigative study focus on a conceptual supply chain management (SCM) model for ready-made garments (RMG) industry of Bangladesh. The final goal of SCM is to convey information one group or individual to another. One group or individual should work together with its downstream customers and upstream suppliers to achieve supply chain goal. Communication helps to express employees to conquer their goals without any misinterpretation or misunderstanding. Current circumstances of SCM practice in garments industries have been revealed after questionnaire survey.

Keywords: SCM, RMG, managing inventory, planning production, managing distribution, mean and standard deviation.

GJHSS-H Classification: FOR Code: 860401

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Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

Supply Chain Effectiveness of Clothing Manufacturing Company in Bangladesh

Avizit Basak α, Sobuj Kumar Ray σ, Md. Aminul Islam ρ & M. M. Israfil Shahin Seddiq ω

Abstract- Supply chain management (SCM) is the essential management philosophy and practice of materials, information, and finances where processes flow from supplier to manufacturer to wholesaler to retailer to consumer. This investigative study focus on a conceptual supply chain management (SCM) model for ready-made garments (RMG) industry of Bangladesh. The final goal of SCM is to convey information one group or individual to another. One group or individual should work together with its downstream customers and upstream suppliers to achieve supply chain goal. Communication helps to express employees to conquer their goals without any misinterpretation or misunderstanding. Current circumstances of SCM practice in garments industries have been revealed after questionnaire survey. In this study an endeavor has been taken to widen a more valuable supply chain for Bangladeshi RMG to assistance from competitive advantage in the global apparel business through analyzing the present supply chain and investigating the corelation among the competitors in the supply chain. In analyzing the data for this study, likert's scale used for easy construction of table analysis. Finally some recommendations are provided on the basis of findings.

Keywords: SCM, RMG, managing inventory, planning production, managing distribution, mean and standard deviation.

I. Introduction

A supply chain is a process of procuring raw materials, renovate them into intermediate goods and then final products, and deliver the products to customers through a distribution system [1]. The basic objective of supply chain is to "optimize performance of the chain to add as much value as possible for the least cost possible. In other words, it focus to bond all the supply chain agents to mutually cooperate within the firm as a way to maximize productivity in the supply chain and deliver the most benefits to all related parties [2]. Supply chain effectiveness can be explained as an peripheral standard "of how prominently a group organization is facing the demands of the various groups and organizations that are concerned with its activities through its supply chain" [3] which approximately is a construct "for doing the right things" or having validity of outcome [4]. A conceptualization of effectiveness as use cost is attractive to highlight that how well demands in the above definition is indistinct [5] seem to submit use value to evaluation of the network's utilization of resources. In resource dependence viewpoint is effectiveness seen as an sovereign quantify for evaluating organizations. Meeting demands of various evaluators means that conflicting as well as compatible demands are prevalent [3] predict disagreement when one stakeholder's command constraints other stakeholder's require, which is the case for the supply chain actors. Conflict but also teamwork gives learning in one procedure that is leveraged in other trade processes. Suppliers are effective if they deliver what is asked for, no matter if they are bound to fill their warehouses to supervise, i.e. if they manage the task unproductively. In SCM value is secure with supply chains' elasticity and agility to customer demand. Effective supply chains are strongly integrated with prominent management of existing interdependencies. Even though different researchers give different categories of the processes involved in a supply chain, these processes are somewhat functionally independent and quite similar in that sense. Referred [6] to the underlying business processes as mechanisms and included these processes in a complete supply chain which directly and indirectly impact on effectiveness of supply chain:

1. Forecasting demand on the basis of market research,
2. Placing and receiving customer orders,
3. Managing inventory,
4. Planning production,
5. Communicating between supply chain partners and
6. Managing distribution (shipping)

Forecasting is the basis for all strategic and planning decisions in a supply chain [7] i.e.: production: scheduling, inventory, aggregate planning, and marketing: sales force allocation, promotions, new

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production introduction, and finance: plant/equipment investment, budgetary planning.

Customer order entry technique determines the way and extent to which customer needs are converted into information exchanged along the supply chain. The customer order path is the path that an order traverses is another important measure whereby the time consumed in various channels can be measured. By analyzing the customer order path, non-value adding activities can be identfied so that suitable steps can be taken to eliminate them.

Inventory encompasses all the raw materials, work in process, and finished goods within a supply chain. Changing inventory policies can dramatically alter the supply chain's efficiency & effectiveness [7]. If effectiveness is a strategic competitive priority, a firm can locate larger amounts of inventory closer to customers [7]. There are three basic decisions to make regarding the creation and holding of inventory:
Cycle Inventory is the amount of inventory needed to satisfy demand for the product in the period between purchases of the product. Safety Inventory is held as a buffer against uncertainty. If demand forecasting could be done with perfect accuracy, then the only inventory that would be needed would be cycle inventory. Seasonal Inventory is inventory that is built up in anticipation of predictable increases in demand that occur at certain times of the year [7].

Planning the order and goods resources the next step is to make/assemble products. This is the commotion carried out by organizations that own production sites, and their quality has a major impact on product price, excellence, momentum of delivery and delivery consistency, andflexibility [8]. As it is quite a major part of the supply chain, manufacture emphasizes to be measured and continuously enhanced the product. Appropriate metrics for the manufacture level are as follows. Order lead-time, the total order sequence time, called order to delivery cycle time, refers to the time elapsed in between the release of customer order until the delivery offinished goods to the customer. The diminution in order cycle time leads to decrease in supply chain response time, and as such is an essential performance measure and source of spirited advantage [9]. It determines competitiveness directly interacting with customer. According to [8] a plant that manufactures a broad product range is likely to commence new products more slowly than plants with a narrow product range. This clearly suggests that product range affects supply chain performance. Effectiveness of scheduling techniques is another important measure of supply chain effectiveness. Scheduling refers to the time or date on or by which activities are to be undertaken.

To resource flow in an operating system and effectiveness such fixing has an important impact on production and thus supplies chain performance. For example, development techniques of JIT, MRP and ERP have expositing on purchasing of time and batch size.

In case of the supply chain, since scheduling depends heavily on customer demands and supplier performance, the scheduling tools should be viewed in that context [10].

Communication with the supply link is another important measure of supply chain effectiveness. Conventionally supplier performance measures were based on price discrepancy on receipt and on time delivery. For many years, the selection of suppliers and product choice were mainly based on price competition with less attention afforded to other criteria like quality, reliability, etc. More recently, the holistic approaches to evaluating suppliers has undergone drastic change. Managing distribution (shipping) directly impacts on effectiveness on supply chain. Efficiency of delivery performance may increase by reduction in lead time [11]. On-time delivery is another important aspect of delivery performance. Customer service level may measure on time delivery.

A parallel conception, on time order fill, was used by [9], relating it as a combination of delivery consistency and order wholeness. Percentage of finished goods at transit point is significant to increase in tried up capital. Location of depot, vehicle speed, driver reliability and frequency of delivery influence delivery speed. Inventory level may deduce by increase in efficiency in delivery level [12]. Implementation of Supply chain practices in textile and garments sector has slowly increased since the 1980s. A number of methods and techniques are projected and the concept is emancipated from many perspectives. However [13]-[14] explain outstanding review on supply chain management literature on Clothing industry. These papers define the concept, principals, nature, and development of supply chain and indicate that there is an intense research being conducted around the world in this field they critically assessed developments in the theory and practice of supply management. A procedure is an ordered and considered set of activities designed to fabricate a specific output for a particular customer or market [15]. It is holistic approaches within chronological or analogous relationships that cover over a period of time.

II. Key Factors Affecting Supply Chain Effectiveness

According to factory manager Mr. Shafiq Ahmed and merchandising manager Nayeem Hasan of Saba Attires Ltd, it is identified that six factors directly and indirectly impact on effectiveness of supply chain, they are: (1) Forecasting demand (2) Customer orders placement (3) Managing inventory (4) Planning

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production (5) Communication between supply chain members (6) Managing distribution.

a) Forecasting Demand

Forecasting demand is so important as it indicates how other factors will progress in supply chain. Effectiveness in supply chain system can bring on by measuring accurate demand and supplying materials on the basis of demand. By doing this Saba attires Ltd can take the appropriate measure regarding demand forecast and feedback from customers.

b) Circuit Customer Orders Placement

The customer order path is important measurement by which the time spent in different channels can be determined. The time spent in different channels directly effects in supply chain system. Since supply chain of Saba Attires Ltd effectively identify the customer's order from salesman .they can time bound action appropriate for implementing this orders.

c) Managing Inventory

Inventory encompasses all the raw materials, work in process, and finished goods within a supply chain. Saba Attires Ltd has the freedom to change inventory policies can dramatically alter the supply chain's efficiency & effectiveness.

d) Planning Production

The process which associate making confirm that sufficient staffs ready to making product with sufficient raw material to get finished goods in specified schedule time. A manufacturing company must have planning department to maximize efficiency to satisfied consumer. The reduction in order cycle time leads to reduction in supply chain response time, and as such, is an important performance measure and source of competitive advantage.

e) Communication Among Supply Chain Members

Effective communication among supply chain members (such as- suppliers, production managers, merchandisers etc.) impacts in supply chain system because Saba Attires Ltd from mangers to workers are well efficient on performing the supply chain system.

f) Managing Distribution

Distribution system has huge impacts in supply chain effectiveness. On-time delivery reflects whether perfect delivery has taken place or not. Various factors like vehicle speed, driver reliability and location of depots that can influence delivery system and effectiveness of this organizational supply chain system.

III. Data Analysis

In In analyzing the data collected for this study, Likert's Summative Rating scale used in section for easy construction of table analysis and reliability of data. Mean rating will be used to rate the variables. Likert's Summative Rating method of analysis was used in the analysis these research questions.

The assigned weight to the various alternatives is Strongly Agree=5, Agree=4, Neutral=3, Disagree=2 and strong disagree=1.

Mean rating was used for the variables. To get the mean of each table this formula was used

$$Mean = \overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{\sum f} \qquad (1)$$

Where f =frequency of respondent

x=weight assigned to each alternatives

Formula for calculation as used in the reaserch is by multiplication of number of respondents under each option with the weight assigned to the option and summing up to divide by the total number of respondents in order to give the mean rating.

The decision rule is that the mean ($\overline{X}$) of the total response falls –

4.5 to 5.0, it means Supply Chain is -

'Highly Effective'

3.5 to below 4.5, it means Supply Chain is -
'Moderately Effective'

2.5 to below 3.5, it means Supply Chain is -

'Marginally Effective'

2 to below 2.5, it means Supply Chain is -
'Ineffective'

1 to below 2.0, it means Supply Chain is -
'Highly Ineffective'

Standard Deviation is also calculated in order to verify the reliability of data. Standard Deviation less than 1 (SD < 1) is considerd as reliability of data as difference between responses is low.

Table 1: Supply chain operating costs are relevant.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	0	0	0	2.47	0.87
Agree	4	10	10		
Neutral	17	42.5	52.5		
Disagree	13	32.5	85		
Strongly Disagree	6	15	100		

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From table 01, it is found that 10% of the respondents strongly agree and agree that current supply chain operating costs are relevant. The mean rate is 2.47 which fells into range between 2 to below 2.5 which means, it is 'ineffective'.

Table 2: Procurement, manufacturing and delivering stages are able to coordinate to reduce time & cost.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	14	35	35	4.07	0.85
Agree	17	42.5	77.5		
Neutral	7	17.5	95		
Disagree	2	5	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

From table 02, it is seen that almost 82% of the respondents strongly agree & agree that current procurement, manufacturing and delivering stages are able to reduce time and cost. Analysis of the above table shows that the mean rate 4.12 that fells into range 3.5 to below 4.5 which indicates that procurement, manufacturing and delivering stages of Saba Attires Ltd are 'moderately effective' to reduce time and cost.

Table 3: Company has cost effective transportation system.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	0	0	0	2.25	0.83
Agree	4	10	10		
Neutral	8	20	30		
Disagree	22	55	85		
Strongly Disagree	6	15	100		

From table 3, it is found that 10% of the respondents strongly agree & agree that Saba Attires Ltd has cost effective transportation system. The mean rate is 2.25 fells into 'ineffective' indicator range which is 2 to below 2.5.

Table 4: The response time of order placement is fast.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	18	45	45	4.27	0.75
Agree	15	37.5	82.5		
Neutral	7	17.5	100		
Disagree	0	0	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

From the analysis of the above table it is seen that almost 83% of respondants agree or strongly agree that current supply shain system allows the fast response time of order placement. In this variable the mean rate is 4.27 which indicate that the supply chain of SABA Attires Ltd is 'moderately effective' in terms of order placement.

Table 5: Inventory management department maintains enough inventories to allow uninterrupted production.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	14	35	35	4.12	0.82
Agree	19	47.5	82.5		
Neutral	5	12.5	95		
Disagree	2	5	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

Table 5 implies that almost 78% of respontants agree or strongly agree that Inventory Management Department maintains enough inventory that alows untinturrupted production. The mean rate which is 4.07 ensures that in terms Inventory Management supply chain of SABA Attires Ltd is 'moderately effective'.

Table 6: Order Lead Time of SABA Attires Ltd is good enough compared with the industry average.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	17	42.5	42.5	4.30	0.68
Agree	18	45	87.5		
Neutral	5	12.5	100		
Disagree	0	0	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

Table 6 shows that almost 88% of respontants agree or strongly agree that the company's Order Lead Time is good enough compare with the industry's Order Lead Time. The mean rate which is 4.30 indicates that in term of order lead time the supply chain is 'moderately effective'.

Table 7: Suppliers are reliable to supply the right materials to the right place at the right time.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid(%)	Cumulative(%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	13	32.5	32.5	4.02	0.89
Agree	18	45	77.5		
Neutral	6	15	92.5		
Disagree	3	7.5	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

From the analysis of the above table it is seen almost 78% of respondants agree or strongly agree that suppliers are reliable to supply the right materials to the right place at the right time. In this variable the mean rate is 4.02 which indicate that it is 'moderately effective'.

Table 8: Current supply chain management makes communication among supply chain members faster, easier and more frequent.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	21	52.5	52.5	4.50	0.5 5
Agree	18	45	97.5		
Neutral	1	2.5	100		
Disagree	0	0	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

From table 8, it is seen that that 98% of the respondents strongly agree & agree that supply chain management makes better communication among supply chain members. Analysis of the above table shows that the mean rate is 4.50, which fells into range 4.5 to below 5.0. It indicates that the supply chain is highly effective in terms of communication among supply chain members.

Table 9: Company has cost effective warehouse strategies to reduce the cost to maintain inventory.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	0	0	0	3.17	0.71
Agree	14	35	35		
Neutral	19	47.5	82.5		
Disagree	7	17.5	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

Table 9 shows that almost 35% of respontants agree and strongly agree that current supply chain has cost effective warehouse strategies to reduce the cost to maintain inventory. The mean rate which is 3.17 indicates that supply chain is 'marginaly effective' in this particuler measure.

Table 10: Shipments are delivered as per the dateline.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	4	10	10	3.57	0.84
Agree	20	50	60		
Neutral	11	27.5	87.5		
Disagree	5	12.5	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

From table 10, it is found that 60% of the respondents strongly agree & agree that shipments are delivered as per the dateline. The mean rate is 3.57 fells into 'moderately effective' indicator range which is 3.5 to below 4.5.

Table 11: Company's supply chain process is consistent enough to meet every departments demand efficiently.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	2	5	5	3.25	0.83
Agree	13	32.5	37.5		
Neutral	19	47.5	85		
Disagree	5	12.5	97.5		
Strongly Disagree	1	2.5	100		

From table 11, it is found that almost 38% of the respondents strongly agree & agree that Current supply chain process is consistent enough to meet every departments demand efficiently. The mean rate is 3.25 fells into 'marginally effective' indicator range which is 2.5 to below 3.5.

Table 12: The shipping department determines the most efficient method to ship the products in time.

	Number of Respondants (N)	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)	Mean $\overline{X}$	SD
Strongly Agree	7	17.5	17.5	3.82	0.84
Agree	23	57.5	75		
Neutral	6	15	90		
Disagree	4	10	100		
Strongly Disagree	0	0	100		

From table 12, it is found that 75% of the respondents strongly agree & agree that the shipping department determines the most efficient method to ship the products in time. The mean rate is 3.82 fells into 'moderately effective' indicator range which is 3.5 to below 4.5.

IV. Finding

1. In term of operating costs, the supply chain of Saba Attires Ltd is ineffective.
2. Procurement, manufacturing and delivering stages of Saba Attires Ltd are moderately effective to reduce time and cost.
3. In term of cost effective transportation system, Saba Attires Ltd is ineffective
4. Supply chain is moderately effective in case of response time of order placement.
5. Supply chain is moderately effective in term of untinturrupted production.
6. In term of order lead time, the supply chain of Saba Attires Ltd is moderately effective.
7. Suppliers are reliable to supply the right materials to the right place at the right time is moderately effective.
8. In term of communication with supply chain members, supply chain is highly effective.
9. Supply chain of Saba Attires Ltd is marginaly effective in term of cost effective warehouse strategies to reduce the cost to maintain inventory.
10. Supply chain is moderately effective in term of shipment delivery.
11. In term of consistency to meet every departments demand efficiently, supply chain is marginaly effective.

12. In case of the most efficient method to ship the products in time, Saba Attires Ltd is moderately effective.

V. Conclusion

Supply chains are efficient when the exchange value of the system fulfills desire of the supply chain members. . The study finds that in some supply areas like - price forecasting system, inventory; supply chain of Saba Attires Ltd is ineffective or marginally effective. In terms of order placement, communication, production management; supply chain is highly and moderately effective. The modern business is characterized with shorter product life cycles, rapid new product introductions, increasingly knowledgeable, well informed, and sophisticated customers. This forces supply chains to be more effective. The modern supply chains are thus expected to respond rapidly, effectively, and efficiently to changes in the market place so as to sustain, and further more create competitive advantage. It is therefore very important to study the effectiveness of supply chains.

VI. Recomendation

Saba Attires Ltd should improve their supply chain practice in those areas in which are current ineffective or marginally effective.

Operating costing system of Saba Attires Ltd is ineffective. Supply chain operating costs are under pressure today from rising shipment prices, more global customers, rising labor rates and rising commodity prices.

- Operating costing system of Saba Attires Ltd is ineffective. Supply chain operating costs are under pressure today from rising freight prices, more global customers, rising labor rates and rising commodity prices. If operating costs are not accurately predicted, the cost will be increased as consequence. So, price forecasting system of all relevent arenas should be improved.
- Transportation system should be improved as the study finds that this function is currently in ineffective level. Although currently distribution shedule is not hampering that much as study shows but it can seriously impacts on production and distribution. Transportation system can be improved by using better vehicles.
- Saba Attires Ltd should improved warehouse facilities by making more warehouses nearer to the factory which will reduce cost as well as time.

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Fellows

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- The “FARSHS” is a dignified title which is accorded to a person’s name viz. Dr. John E. Hall, Ph.D., FARSS or William Walldroff, M.S., FARSHS.

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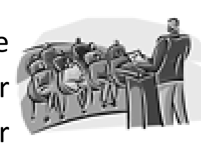

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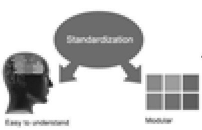

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The MARSHS member can apply for approval, grading and certification of standards of their educational and Institutional Degrees to Open Association of Research, Society U.S.A.

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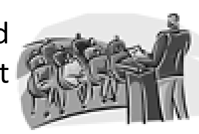

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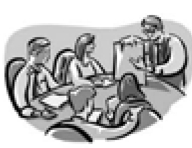

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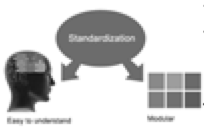

After nomination of your institution as “Institutional Fellow” and constantly functioning successfully for one year, we can consider giving recognition to your institute to function as Regional/Zonal office on our behalf.
The board can also take up the additional allied activities for betterment after our consultation.

The following entitlements are applicable to individual Fellows:

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Note :

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- In case of "Difference of Opinion [if any]" among the Board members, our decision will be final and binding to everyone.

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TECHNIQUES FOR WRITING A GOOD QUALITY RESEARCH PAPER:

1. Choosing the topic: In most cases, the topic is searched by the interest of author but it can be also suggested by the guides. You can have several topics and then you can judge that in which topic or subject you are finding yourself most comfortable. This can be done by asking several questions to yourself, like Will I be able to carry our search in this area? Will I find all necessary recourses to accomplish the search? Will I be able to find all information in this field area? If the answer of these types of questions will be "Yes" then you can choose that topic. In most of the cases, you may have to conduct the surveys and have to visit several places because this field is related to Computer Science and Information Technology. Also, you may have to do a lot of work to find all rise and falls regarding the various data of that subject. Sometimes, detailed information plays a vital role, instead of short information.

2. Evaluators are human: First thing to remember that evaluators are also human being. They are not only meant for rejecting a paper. They are here to evaluate your paper. So, present your Best.

3. Think Like Evaluators: If you are in a confusion or getting demotivated that your paper will be accepted by evaluators or not, then think and try to evaluate your paper like an Evaluator. Try to understand that what an evaluator wants in your research paper and automatically you will have your answer.

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12. Make all efforts: Make all efforts to mention what you are going to write in your paper. That means always have a good start. Try to mention everything in introduction, that what is the need of a particular research paper. Polish your work by good skill of writing and always give an evaluator, what he wants.

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19. Know what you know: Always try to know, what you know by making objectives. Else, you will be confused and cannot achieve your target.

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21. Arrangement of information: Each section of the main body should start with an opening sentence and there should be a changeover at the end of the section. Give only valid and powerful arguments to your topic. You may also maintain your arguments with records.

22. Never start in last minute: Always start at right time and give enough time to research work. Leaving everything to the last minute will degrade your paper and spoil your work.

23. Multitasking in research is not good: Doing several things at the same time proves bad habit in case of research activity. Research is an area, where everything has a particular time slot. Divide your research work in parts and do particular part in particular time slot.

24. Never copy others' work: Never copy others' work and give it your name because if evaluator has seen it anywhere you will be in trouble.

25. Take proper rest and food: No matter how many hours you spend for your research activity, if you are not taking care of your health then all your efforts will be in vain. For a quality research, study is must, and this can be done by taking proper rest and food.

26. Go for seminars: Attend seminars if the topic is relevant to your research area. Utilize all your resources.

27. Refresh your mind after intervals: Try to give rest to your mind by listening to soft music or by sleeping in intervals. This will also improve your memory.

28. Make colleagues: Always try to make colleagues. No matter how sharper or intelligent you are, if you make colleagues you can have several ideas, which will be helpful for your research.

29. Think technically: Always think technically. If anything happens, then search its reasons, its benefits, and demerits.

30. Think and then print: When you will go to print your paper, notice that tables are not be split, headings are not detached from their descriptions, and page sequence is maintained.

31. Adding unnecessary information: Do not add unnecessary information, like, I have used MS Excel to draw graph. Do not add irrelevant and inappropriate material. These all will create superfluous. Foreign terminology and phrases are not apropos. One should NEVER take a broad view. Analogy in script is like feathers on a snake. Not at all use a large word when a very small one would be sufficient. Use words properly, regardless of how others use them. Remove quotations. Puns are for kids, not grunt readers. Amplification is a billion times of inferior quality than sarcasm.

32. Never oversimplify everything: To add material in your research paper, never go for oversimplification. This will definitely irritate the evaluator. Be more or less specific. Also too, by no means, ever use rhythmic redundancies. Contractions aren't essential and shouldn't be there used. Comparisons are as terrible as clichés. Give up ampersands and abbreviations, and so on. Remove commas, that are, not necessary. Parenthetical words however should be together with this in commas. Understatement is all the time the complete best way to put onward earth-shaking thoughts. Give a detailed literary review.

33. Report concluded results: Use concluded results. From raw data, filter the results and then conclude your studies based on measurements and observations taken. Significant figures and appropriate number of decimal places should be used. Parenthetical remarks are prohibitive. Proofread carefully at final stage. In the end give outline to your arguments. Spot out perspectives of further study of this subject. Justify your conclusion by at the bottom of them with sufficient justifications and examples.

34. After conclusion: Once you have concluded your research, the next most important step is to present your findings. Presentation is extremely important as it is the definite medium though which your research is going to be in print to the rest of the crowd. Care should be taken to categorize your thoughts well and present them in a logical and neat manner. A good quality research paper format is essential because it serves to highlight your research paper and bring to light all necessary aspects in your research.

Informal Guidelines of Research Paper Writing

Key points to remember:

- Submit all work in its final form.
- Write your paper in the form, which is presented in the guidelines using the template.
- Please note the criterion for grading the final paper by peer-reviewers.

Final Points:

A purpose of organizing a research paper is to let people to interpret your effort selectively. The journal requires the following sections, submitted in the order listed, each section to start on a new page.

The introduction will be compiled from reference matter and will reflect the design processes or outline of basis that direct you to make study. As you will carry out the process of study, the method and process section will be constructed as like that. The result segment will show related statistics in nearly sequential order and will direct the reviewers next to the similar intellectual paths throughout the data that you took to carry out your study. The discussion section will provide understanding of the data and projections as to the implication of the results. The use of good quality references all through the paper will give the effort trustworthiness by representing an alertness of prior workings.

Writing a research paper is not an easy job no matter how trouble-free the actual research or concept. Practice, excellent preparation, and controlled record keeping are the only means to make straightforward the progression.

General style:

Specific editorial column necessities for compliance of a manuscript will always take over from directions in these general guidelines.

To make a paper clear

· Adhere to recommended page limits

Mistakes to evade

- Insertion a title at the foot of a page with the subsequent text on the next page
- Separating a table/chart or figure - impound each figure/table to a single page
- Submitting a manuscript with pages out of sequence

In every sections of your document

· Use standard writing style including articles ("a", "the," etc.)

· Keep on paying attention on the research topic of the paper

· Use paragraphs to split each significant point (excluding for the abstract)

· Align the primary line of each section

· Present your points in sound order

· Use present tense to report well accepted

· Use past tense to describe specific results

· Shun familiar wording, don't address the reviewer directly, and don't use slang, slang language, or superlatives

· Shun use of extra pictures - include only those figures essential to presenting results

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The summary should be two hundred words or less. It should briefly and clearly explain the key findings reported in the manuscript--must have precise statistics. It should not have abnormal acronyms or abbreviations. It should be logical in itself. Shun citing references at this point.

An abstract is a brief distinct paragraph summary of finished work or work in development. In a minute or less a reviewer can be taught the foundation behind the study, common approach to the problem, relevant results, and significant conclusions or new questions.

Write your summary when your paper is completed because how can you write the summary of anything which is not yet written? Wealth of terminology is very essential in abstract. Yet, use comprehensive sentences and do not let go readability for briefness. You can maintain it succinct by phrasing sentences so that they provide more than lone rationale. The author can at this moment go straight to shortening the outcome. Sum up the study, with the subsequent elements in any summary. Try to maintain the initial two items to no more than one ruling each.

- Reason of the study - theory, overall issue, purpose
- Fundamental goal
- To the point depiction of the research
- Consequences, including definite statistics - if the consequences are quantitative in nature, account quantitative data; results of any numerical analysis should be reported
- Significant conclusions or questions that track from the research(es)

Approach:

- Single section, and succinct
- As a outline of job done, it is always written in past tense
- A conceptual should situate on its own, and not submit to any other part of the paper such as a form or table
- Center on shortening results - bound background information to a verdict or two, if completely necessary
- What you account in an conceptual must be regular with what you reported in the manuscript
- Exact spelling, clearness of sentences and phrases, and appropriate reporting of quantities (proper units, important statistics) are just as significant in an abstract as they are anywhere else

Introduction:

The **Introduction** should "introduce" the manuscript. The reviewer should be presented with sufficient background information to be capable to comprehend and calculate the purpose of your study without having to submit to other works. The basis for the study should be offered. Give most important references but shun difficult to make a comprehensive appraisal of the topic. In the introduction, describe the problem visibly. If the problem is not acknowledged in a logical, reasonable way, the reviewer will have no attention in your result. Speak in common terms about techniques used to explain the problem, if needed, but do not present any particulars about the protocols here. Following approach can create a valuable beginning:

- Explain the value (significance) of the study
- Shield the model - why did you employ this particular system or method? What is its compensation? You strength remark on its appropriateness from a abstract point of vision as well as point out sensible reasons for using it.
- Present a justification. Status your particular theory (es) or aim(s), and describe the logic that led you to choose them.
- Very for a short time explain the tentative propose and how it skilled the declared objectives.

Approach:

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- Sort out your thoughts; manufacture one key point with every section. If you make the four points listed above, you will need a least of four paragraphs.

- Present surroundings information only as desirable in order hold up a situation. The reviewer does not desire to read the whole thing you know about a topic.
- Shape the theory/purpose specifically - do not take a broad view.
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This part is supposed to be the easiest to carve if you have good skills. A sound written Procedures segment allows a capable scientist to replacement your results. Present precise information about your supplies. The suppliers and clarity of reagents can be helpful bits of information. Present methods in sequential order but linked methodologies can be grouped as a segment. Be concise when relating the protocols. Attempt for the least amount of information that would permit another capable scientist to spare your outcome but be cautious that vital information is integrated. The use of subheadings is suggested and ought to be synchronized with the results section. When a technique is used that has been well described in another object, mention the specific item describing a way but draw the basic principle while stating the situation. The purpose is to text all particular resources and broad procedures, so that another person may use some or all of the methods in one more study or referee the scientific value of your work. It is not to be a step by step report of the whole thing you did, nor is a methods section a set of orders.

Materials:

- Explain materials individually only if the study is so complex that it saves liberty this way.
- Embrace particular materials, and any tools or provisions that are not frequently found in laboratories.
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- If use of a definite type of tools.
- Materials may be reported in a part section or else they may be recognized along with your measures.

Methods:

- Report the method (not particulars of each process that engaged the same methodology)
- Describe the method entirely
- To be succinct, present methods under headings dedicated to specific dealings or groups of measures
- Simplify - details how procedures were completed not how they were exclusively performed on a particular day.
- If well known procedures were used, account the procedure by name, possibly with reference, and that's all.

Approach:

- It is embarrassed or not possible to use vigorous voice when documenting methods with no using first person, which would focus the reviewer's interest on the researcher rather than the job. As a result when script up the methods most authors use third person passive voice.
- Use standard style in this and in every other part of the paper - avoid familiar lists, and use full sentences.

What to keep away from

- Resources and methods are not a set of information.
- Skip all descriptive information and surroundings - save it for the argument.
- Leave out information that is immaterial to a third party.

Results:

The principle of a results segment is to present and demonstrate your conclusion. Create this part a entirely objective details of the outcome, and save all understanding for the discussion.

The page length of this segment is set by the sum and types of data to be reported. Carry on to be to the point, by means of statistics and tables, if suitable, to present consequences most efficiently.You must obviously differentiate material that would usually be incorporated in a study editorial from any unprocessed data or additional appendix matter that would not be available. In fact, such matter should not be submitted at all except requested by the instructor.

Content

- Sum up your conclusion in text and demonstrate them, if suitable, with figures and tables.
- In manuscript, explain each of your consequences, point the reader to remarks that are most appropriate.
- Present a background, such as by describing the question that was addressed by creation an exacting study.
- Explain results of control experiments and comprise remarks that are not accessible in a prescribed figure or table, if appropriate.
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- Do not present the similar data more than once.
- Manuscript should complement any figures or tables, not duplicate the identical information.
- Never confuse figures with tables - there is a difference.

Approach

- As forever, use past tense when you submit to your results, and put the whole thing in a reasonable order.
- Put figures and tables, appropriately numbered, in order at the end of the report
- If you desire, you may place your figures and tables properly within the text of your results part.

Figures and tables

- If you put figures and tables at the end of the details, make certain that they are visibly distinguished from any attach appendix materials, such as raw facts
- Despite of position, each figure must be numbered one after the other and complete with subtitle
- In spite of position, each table must be titled, numbered one after the other and complete with heading
- All figure and table must be adequately complete that it could situate on its own, divide from text

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- Give details all of your remarks as much as possible, focus on mechanisms.
- Make a decision if the tentative design sufficiently addressed the theory, and whether or not it was correctly restricted.
- Try to present substitute explanations if sensible alternatives be present.
- One research will not counter an overall question, so maintain the large picture in mind, where do you go next? The best studies unlock new avenues of study. What questions remain?
- Recommendations for detailed papers will offer supplementary suggestions.

Approach:

- When you refer to information, differentiate data generated by your own studies from available information
- Submit to work done by specific persons (including you) in past tense.
- Submit to generally acknowledged facts and main beliefs in present tense.

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Topics	Grades		
	A-B	**C-D**	**E-F**
Abstract	Clear and concise with appropriate content, Correct format. 200 words or below	Unclear summary and no specific data, Incorrect form Above 200 words	No specific data with ambiguous information Above 250 words
Introduction	Containing all background details with clear goal and appropriate details, flow specification, no grammar and spelling mistake, well organized sentence and paragraph, reference cited	Unclear and confusing data, appropriate format, grammar and spelling errors with unorganized matter	Out of place depth and content, hazy format
Methods and Procedures	Clear and to the point with well arranged paragraph, precision and accuracy of facts and figures, well organized subheads	Difficult to comprehend with embarrassed text, too much explanation but completed	Incorrect and unorganized structure with hazy meaning
Result	Well organized, Clear and specific, Correct units with precision, correct data, well structuring of paragraph, no grammar and spelling mistake	Complete and embarrassed text, difficult to comprehend	Irregular format with wrong facts and figures
Discussion	Well organized, meaningful specification, sound conclusion, logical and concise explanation, highly structured paragraph reference cited	Wordy, unclear conclusion, spurious	Conclusion is not cited, unorganized, difficult to comprehend
References	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring

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