



## The perception of the body and technology in the science fiction story *La máquina de respirar* by Juan Pablo Goñi Capurro.

La percepción del cuerpo y la tecnología en el cuento de ciencia ficción *La máquina de respirar* de Juan Pablo Goñi Capurro.

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### ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the science fiction story called *La máquina de respirar* by the author Juan Pablo Goñi Capurro. The purpose of the article is to determine the way in which the new technology is presented compared to the old technology, to determine what its impact is based on the proposal of Solivéz (2003). It is also intended to explain the perception of the body, the functions of the body and the body as a machine.

**Keywords:** Body. Technology. Machine. Perception.

### RESUMEN

En el presente artículo se analiza el cuento de ciencia ficción llamado *La máquina de respirar* del autor Juan Pablo Goñi Capurro. La finalidad del artículo es determinar la forma en la que se presenta la nueva tecnología en comparación con la vieja tecnología, determinar cuál es su



impacto a partir de la propuesta de Solivárez (2003). Además, se pretende explicar cuál es la percepción del cuerpo, las funciones del cuerpo y el cuerpo como máquina.

**Palabras Clave:** Cuerpo. Tecnología. Máquina. Percepción.

## The use and impact of new technology

As science and technology advance, new tools are developed through which a task of everyday life can be optimized. Processes are streamlined, times are shortened, tasks are facilitated, among others, however, to each adaptation of a task through the use of technology, negative and positive impacts are found on the environment, daily life, economy, politics, culture, etc. Solivárez (2003, p. 24) mentions the following impacts:

1. Practical impact: What is it for? What allows us to do that without it would be impossible? What does it facilitate?
2. Symbolic impact: What does it symbolize or represent? What does it connote?
3. Technological impact itself: What pre-existing objects or technical knowledge make it possible? What does it replace or render obsolete? What decreases or makes it less likely? What does it recover or revalue? What obstacles to the development of other technologies does it remove?
4. Environmental impact: Does the use of what resources increase, decrease or replace? What waste or fumes does it produce? What effects does it have on animal and plant life?
5. Ethical impact: What basic human need can best be met? What desires does it generate or potency? What reversible or irreversible damage does it cause? What more beneficial alternatives are there?
6. Epistemological impact: What previous knowledge do you question? What new fields of knowledge does it open or enhance?



Taking into account this proposal, it can be deduced from the use of the new technology that appears in the story the impacts it has on the context that is proposed, which is the XXII century. The descriptions of the analyzed story do not exhaust all the questions that arise regarding the type of impact, but at least one of each type appears. Below are the new technologies mentioned in the text and their impacts on the twenty-first century:

**Table 1.** Impacts of new technology.

New technology	Practical impact	Symbolic impact	Technological impact	Environmental impact	Ethical impact	Epistemological impact
Defense curtain	Protect the planet from the attacks of the cardinals.	Protection	He doesn't show up.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to protect yourself from attacks by others.	Physics
Molecule circulator	Maintains the internal temperature of buildings.	Welfare	Replace the air conditioner	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to have the right climatic conditions to live in.	Physics
Neon flow activator	It generates light.	Visibility or illumination	Replace lamps and spotlights.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to have light in everything to see at all times.	Physics
New energy sources: -Flow of neons.	It is energy and serves to run all the new technology	Not mentioned	It replaces electricity.	It is not mentioned.	Meets energy consumption needs.	Physics



Public teleportation service	It serves to move more quickly from one place to another.	Instant mobility	It replaces the action of long distance walking, conveyors, ferries, wheeled vehicles and airplanes.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to be transported quickly.	Physics
New conveyors	It serves to transport from one place to another.	Fast mobility	Replace wheeled vehicles and airplanes.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to be transported quickly.	Physics
Vehicles for interplanetary travel	It serves to travel to other planets.	Interplanetary mobility	Replace space rockets.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to be transported quickly.	Physics
Ferries	It serves to transport from one place to another.	Fast mobility	Replace wheeled vehicles and airplanes.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to be transported quickly.	Physics
Paredovisor	It is used to project images.	Entertainment	It replaces LED televisions.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to adapt images on any wall.	Physics
Mini phone	Serves to communicate	Communication	It replaces the cell phone and its short battery life.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need for communication and not having to charge it so soon for its 96-hour battery life.	Physics
Hologrammatic divider	It serves to protect the windows.	Protection of the exterior in buildings.	Replace fabric curtains.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the aesthetic need and to	Physics



					protect itself from outside light.	
Biotechnology: Anti-sweat tissue.	It serves not to sweat.	Protection	Decreases sweating.	Suppresses the body's natural sweating.	It satisfies the need not to sweat.	Physics
Athermal suits	It serves to withstand the strong temperatures outside.	Protection	Not present	Not present	It satisfies the need for protection in an extremely hot environment.	Physics
Constant flash	It serves to illuminate in the dark.	Lighting	Replace flashlights and hand lamps.	Minimizes the use of energy and batteries.	It satisfies the need to illuminate in a context in which the energy is gone.	Physics
Extermination compartments	It serves to play.	Fun from violence.	Replace video game consoles.	Not present	It satisfies the need to have fun.	Virtuality
Smart locks	They serve to close doors.	Safety	Replace locks that open with keys.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to feel safe.	Physics
Public water network (runs on new energy)	It serves to supply water to buildings.	Means to obtain water	Replaces the pipe that operates by pressure.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the basic needs that are obtained with water.	Physics
Garbage Processor	It serves to decompose garbage.	Means to dispose of garbage.	Replace trash cans and garbage dumps.	Increases energy use.	It satisfies the need to dispose of	Physics



					waste that is not needed.	
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Source: Own elaboration

## The new and the old technology

The text presents two types of technology: The new and the old (so called in the text itself), the latter considered obsolete, worthy only of an antiquities museum. An opposition is expressed between these two types of technology throughout the story. The old technology has been preserved thanks to the insistence of Hellit (partner of the protagonist and narrator of the story, Wilfred), who is also described as a lover of technological novelties.

Below is a description and comparison between these two types of technology according to the text:

**Table 2.** New and old technology.

NEW TECHNOLOGY	OLD TECHNOLOGY
Defense curtain: It is a kind of layer that protects the planet (not described in the text).	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Molecule circulator: Maintains the internal temperature of buildings (homes, shops, buildings, companies). It was abruptly interrupted after the invasion of the cardinals, so now its board is dark. Circulators were installed massively.	Old air conditioning equipment: Also called cold-heat equipment. It is in the attic along with other obsolete objects. It weighs little. It needs the old plugs. It still works and sets its temperature at eighteen degrees. It produces a jet of fresh air. When working it produces a buzz.



Neon flow activator: Generates light, invaders interrupted the supply.	Old electrical installation: Operates in supplementary mode. The invaders didn't bother to disrupt that supply. Only three percent of the population conserves electricity.  It only serves for lighting if the old luminaires are maintained, it is incompatible with the rest of the (new) appliances and its monthly cost is very expensive.
New energy sources: -Flow of neons (without energy does not run fluid through the pipes) that is part of a general network.	Electricity.
Public teleportation service.	It does not present corresponding or mention.
New conveyors (not described)	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Vehicles (not described) but are used for interplanetary travel.	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Ferries (mentioned but not described).	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Paredovisor: Adaptable to any surface. It does not turn on because there is no energy.	Sixty-inch LED TV.



Mini phone: To communicate. It does not work its battery for 96 hours of charging. Works with circuits.	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Hologrammatic divider: It offers multiple variations of its appearance. It feeds on the neon net.	Vintage curtains, there are in the room thanks to the desire of Hellit. They prevent the light in the house from making it detectable in the distance. They also allow the diffuse orange mist to emanate from the house so that it can be detected in the dark and returned to it.
Biotechnology: Anti-sweat tissue. Recommended by the association of sports coaches.	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Athermal suits: They protect from both cold and heat, they are temperature insulators. They are tight and comfortable. They had been used for an excursion to the planet Mars. They have an oxygen reserve. They have aerodynamic helmets that connect to the neck. It has air back tanks for twelve hours. Its functions are activatable. The viewfinder is dark. They have a communication system. They bring an emergency kit in their pocket.	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Constant flash: It is part of the emergency kit of the athermal suits. It's the size of a finger	It does not present corresponding or mention.



but opens a powerful light cone with minimal battery consumption.	
Extermination compartments: Type of game to which the new generations of the XXII century are affected.	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Smart locks.	It does not present corresponding or mention.
Public water network (powered).	Water drums: Stored by those who still retain the habit of doing so.
Garbage Processor: Makes all garbage disposal, including bags (it is not specified if they are plastic) treatable ecologically.	It does not present corresponding or mention.

**Source:** Own elaboration.

The text contrasts the new technology with the old, which is called obsolete. However, the old technology has the function of saving the lives of the characters and it is considered lucky not to have discarded it:

1. The air conditioning allows to control the temperature to eighteen degrees in the room, in contrast to the prevailing temperature in the middle which is seventy degrees Celsius. The characters suffer from extreme dehydration and both the environment and the floor burn, breathing burns. This temperature control generated by the obsolete air conditioning equipment is perceived as hopeful, vital:
  - a) The hum of the air conditioner sounds like "[...] the most beautiful melody in the universe, performed by an orchestra selected from among the great musicians of history." (Goñi, 2018, p. 61)



- b) Despite the fact that the circulator of molecules does not work and the temperature does not self-regulate the house the air conditioning is perceived as the "[...] team that has given us back hope [...]" (p. 63).
  - c) The temperature of seventy degrees extremely dehydrates the characters, so that the cold air coming out of the air conditioner is perceived as "[...] the fresh current that at this moment is the symbol of life" (p. 65).
  - d) Hellit has preserved obsolete devices with the crazy idea of setting up an antiquities museum, so Wilfred now conceives of it as the "[...] madness that has saved my life" (p. 68).
  - e) Wilfred, at the end of the story, has changed his perception of the air conditioning equipment: "Pilar winks at me, she is without a suit, in charge of guarding our main weapon: the air conditioning equipment that will keep us alive in battles" (p. 68).
2. The old electricity allowed some of the characters to have light, as the new energies stopped working. The atmosphere is described as dark, even on Wilfred Street states that they could not return home without the orange light escaping through the curtains: "They allow a diffuse orange haze to emanate from the room [...]" (p. 63).
  3. The curtains, which have already been replaced in the XXII century by hologrammatic dividers, allow light without allowing them to be detected by the cardinals: "[...] Hellit's curtains prevent the house from being a detectable lighthouse in the distance [...]" (p. 63).
  4. The water drums allow them to access the vital liquid because the public water network does not work. These drums have them because some kept the old habit of storing them.
  5. The survivors find in the house of a man named the madman, arrows and crossbows to defend themselves from the invaders.

In the text, the new and the old come together so that a team of survivors can be gathered. The new technology helps Wilfred and his sister Edith to look for them and find them in the neighboring houses and in the super argento:



1. They use the athermal suits to survive a hostile outdoors at a temperature of seventy degrees Celsius and look for people who were still alive, to take them home.
2. The constant flash allows you to see in the dark to search for survivors.
3. The old technologies allow Wilfred and Edith's house to become the base where the survivors of the area end up gathered, in total 9 people.

New technologies are also used in the XXII century for decorative purposes:

1. Ornamental trees (interrupt starlighting): They seem to hinder Wilfred and Edith's search for survivors, blocking the scarce starlight. The environment is dark and full of gloom.
2. Hologrammatic divider that offers various appearances: It no longer works because its energy depends on the neon network, which is no longer active.
3. Dusks designed for drinking martinis in the garden - they are mentioned in the text, but it is not indicated whether they still work or not.

There is only one type of biotechnology that is mentioned in the story: Edith's anti-sweat fabrics, which have not served in such extreme heat, because Edith unconscious has the clothes that adhere to her because of how wet she is. This type of technology is fictional, but it could be contemplated by Rueda-López (2007) in his article "Technology in the society of the XXI century: Dawn of a new industrial revolution" (p. 2), where he mentions as one of the future technologies:

Injectable Tissue Engineering: To replace traditional organ transplants, a method is about to be applied where joints are injected with designed mixtures of polymers, cells and growth stimulators that solidify and form healthy tissues (p. 2).

Wilfred claims that this type of anti-sweat fabric has been of no use, as Edith is also soaked in sweat, dehydrating due to the high temperature of the environment around them.

In the story, new technologies are used daily for recreational purposes such as:

1. A *trekking* excursion to Mars.
2. A cruise to Saturn's rings.



Although the adjective "obsolete" is constantly used in the text to refer to the old technology, a team that is part of it will end up being the most important element to achieve the survival of the characters: The air conditioning equipment (which in turn operates with the obsolete energy source: Electricity). Its importance reaches such a point that the title of the story *La máquina de respirar* refers to it, because breathing the hot air at seventy degrees is very difficult, the air burns and burns.

The air conditioning equipment acquires the following symbolisms in the text:

1. Hope
2. Symbol of life
3. Main weapon to stay alive between battles
4. Its hum is assimilated to the most beautiful melody in the universe

With this it can be summarized that the perception of this has changed from obsolete machine to a synthesis of hope, life and beauty. In the opposition new technology vs old technology, the old one overlaps, because it is the one that serves to survive. Despite the progress of technological development in the twenty-first century, it is made clear that the basic needs of the human being remain the same:

1. Water: stay hydrated
2. Certain ambient temperature: 18 degrees (in the text, the perfect temperature for Wilfred).
3. Breathable environment
4. Oxygen (in the back tanks to be able to breathe outside the house)
5. Light
6. Food
7. Means of defense: weapons

Five of these basic necessities necessary for survival in the post-apocalyptic environment posed by the text are covered by the old technology: Water drums, air conditioning, electricity, crossbows and their arrows.



## Invaders and New and Old Earth Technology

In the story, the Earth has been invaded and attacked by an alien race: The Cardinals, with whom the Earthlings had already had a bad encounter on the planet Xircón. The cardinals have the following characteristics:

1. Very smart
2. Suitable for living in the terrestrial environment
3. Anthropomorphic
4. Weak
5. They kill easily
6. Fragile

The cardinals have been smart enough to destroy and disable the earthlings' vital technologies with the intention of taking over the planet:

1. They overcame the defense curtain of planet earth.
2. They disconnect the neon network and leave the planet earth without energy, there is no light and no device works, nor the communication ones such as the mini phone.
3. They disrupted the circulator of molecules, which maintains the temperature of buildings, so the temperature rises to 70 degrees.
4. They cut off the public water network, from which people are supplied to drink.

The cardinals are then able to destroy or disable new terrestrial technologies. Despite being so physically fragile, their intelligence has allowed them to set up a scenario of death on earth, because only electrical energy, already obsolete for most and which only retains three percent of the terrestrial population, works. In addition, it is also necessary to have preserved an air conditioning unit to control the temperature and generate a breathable environment. In the words of the protagonist of the story Wilfred:



They are extremely fragile, although intelligent and fit to live in the terrestrial environment. So intelligent that they figured out the weak point of our comfortable society and attacked us where we couldn't defend ourselves. And there are the weak, the fragile, making us boil, killing us as if they were making hard-boiled eggs the way my grandmother, a survivor of the twenty-first century, did. (Goñi, 2018, p. 62).

The cardinals have put an end to the new technologies, but they never thought of deactivating the old ones. They did not take them into consideration and, thanks to this, a handful of human beings manage to survive. Human beings are by far physically stronger than cardinals. A small group of human beings can wipe out hundreds of cardinals because of their fragility. They can be easily killed as Wilfred claims. This fact generates hope in the text for the reader, for the characters of the story hope is *La máquina de respirar*: The air conditioning equipment.

The cardinals are nearby, as ten strange bluish objects flew over the city and Carlos, one of the survivors, saw them descend in the square. Earthlings are ready for battle, prepared with old technologies mainly. Of the new technologies, the athermal suits are the ones that will allow them to fight in the streets and have electric pistols and the constant flash will allow them to see in the dark. The old technologies provide the survivors: water, energy, *La máquina de respirar* (the secret weapon: the air conditioning equipment) and crossbows with their respective arrows.

There is no mention of what technology the cardinals have, in addition to the foreign objects in which they fly. Thus, in the text, a post-apocalyptic scenario for the war between two intelligent species that dominate different technologies is presented.

## The body

The text presents two visions of the body. The first vision is a vision about one's own body and the second is a vision about the body of the other. The body itself is most often expressed from the functions of a certain part of the body and how these parts are described.

The text emphasizes the functions of the body and its parts as shown in the table below:



**Table 3.** Functions and descriptions of the body

Part or action of the organism	Reference in text	Function, process, state or perception
Respiration	"I breathe. It is the first warning that my conscience receives" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55)	Respiratory function. The warning is a sign that goes in relation to the first glimpse of life.
Nose	"The nose is in place, the air that crosses it seems to burn me" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55)	Respiratory function: It is indicated that the air passes through it, as through a place, because the action is to "cross".  Location of one part of the body: The possibility that the nose is in another part is expressed.  It refers to the third-person nose, which gives an idea that the nose may not be part of your body. The adjective "my" is not used to refer to it, although the narrative is in the first person.
Eyes	"I can open my eyes. And see" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55).	Function: View.  The verb power makes the action of seeing become the possibility that it might or might not happen.
Body	"I feel my body, my limbs, I am complete" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55).	State: Welfare.  Perception: Body completeness.  This phrase may be a simple enunciation of the verification of his state of well-being after the



		explosions, but the way in which it is expressed denotes the consciousness of the subject as a complete unit.
Sweat	"I feel ensopado, the hair soaked, the back" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55).	Process: extreme dehydration suffered by the subject. Perception: By means of verbs that express excess water on the outside of the body.
Palm of the hand	"I risk a slight movement, my right palm comes into contact with the floor of the room" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55).	Process: Contact with the environment. Function: Touch. The possessive adjective "my" describes the hand as the narrator's own, but the action he performs with it does so in the third person.
Blood	"I let the blood circulate, let the body get used to it" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55).	Function: Circulation. Perception: Getting used to it. It gives the impression that the function had stopped during fainting. The verb "to leave" can allude to the subject being able to regulate circulation, but also to the need to be still for circulation to return to normal after fainting.
Consciousness	"Enough time has given me to locate myself in time and place, I must react" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55).	Function: Reaction. This description alludes to the disorientation that the body has suffered after fainting, but the subject becomes aware of the delay.



Mouth and phonatory apparatus	"I try to talk, my mouth is dry, I write, but I don't make sounds" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55).	Status: Dehydration. Function: Speech. There is an inability to exercise the function of speech.
Hands Trunk Head	"I support my hands, first I must erect the trunk and then my head" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55).	Process: Lifting the upper body. Three parts of the body are involved. The process is described in three stages.
Consciousness Sweat	"I force myself to abandon the rambling, I sweat with profusion" (Goñi, 2018, p. 56).	Function: Concentration. Process: Dehydration. Mind still confused, body in the process of dehydration.
Sense	"I feel stable, I can stand up" (Goñi, 2018, p. 56).	Function: Stand up. Status: Stability. Process: Stand up.
Saliva	"I recover saliva" (Goñi, 2018, p. 56).	Process: Production of saliva consciously.
Eat	"I take a few fetas of cold cuts, to add salt to the organism" (Goñi, 2018, p. 56).	Function: Power. Process: Add salt to the body. Action to conserve fluid in the body.
Auditory sense and mind	"I notice one detail: silence" (Goñi, 2018, p. 56).	Function: Listen. Status: Attention. The sense of hearing is activated.



Cough	"It gives me a cough [...] (Goñi, 2018, p. 57).	Function: React to dryness.
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Source: Own elaboration

In the text you can find various aspects of the body parts, but it is the functions that appear as the main characteristic of the narrator's body. It is also possible to observe that in several sentences there seems to be a conceptualization of the body as a machine. Of course, the comparison is never made explicitly, but it would be enough to observe the functions that are described to realize that the human body, like a machine, can send signals, perform processes, stabilize, leave puddles on the floor, activate, execute an idea, repeat and organize data, start and spend energy.

As science and technology have advanced, the human being has had to face a new reality and for this he has had to create a new language with which to name that new reality. But it is not only that the human being has had to create a new language to name the advances of science and technology, but he has also had to adapt to the tools that have been created from them, because technology has made a task easier to perform and that has necessarily had to restructure the way of conceiving the daily life of societies throughout the time. Floralba Aguilar Gordón points out that "Technologies are not independent of culture, they integrate with it an inseparable sociotechnical system" (2011, p. 155).

In this way, the human being makes technology a fundamental part of his day to day and that at some point makes there is a dependence between body and tool. But that union between body and tool is not physical. Technology is added as another element to culture and there are ways to appropriate it through language. In this text there are no tools to which there seems to be a dependency, that is, there is no conception of the tool as an extension of the body. The language that culture has created to name a reality to which the advances of science and technology have been inserted means that sooner or later that same language is used for the human body, because it is no longer just the fact that technology works externally to facilitate a mechanical task, but the advances



of science and technology have served to manipulate and enter the body of the human being, whether or not this to improve the life of the human being. Dependence exists in relation to the devices and machines of the environment, but the narrator of this text does not perceive or describe them as part of his body, but it is his body itself that seems to function like a machine.

Only by relating the technological discourse with the configuration of one's own body in this text can the metaphor of the body as a machine be understood. The situation that is narrated in the text is the one that allows to describe a large part of the functions that are described. The story of the story is appropriate because it makes it necessary to resort to the description of a person who must recover from a fainting caused by a large explosion that is similar to the blackout suffered by an electrical appliance. In the same way that all the devices were turned off after the explosion, the narrator himself says "my world suddenly turned black and I fell into nothingness" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55). This only makes sense when you read in the text the concern you have to recover, maintain and not spend energy, just like an indispensable electrical device. The awakening of the body is described through various phrases involving various senses and processes. Within this awakening, the recovery of his body is narrated until he is stable:

- 1) Regain your breath and feel the warm air.
- 2) Recover your sight.
- 3) You can feel the sensations.
- 4) Wait for the blood to circulate again.
- 5) Wait a moment to relocate in place and time.
- 6) Regains some mobility, but still cannot make sounds with his mouth.
- 7) Feel some stability.
- 8) Recover saliva.
- 9) Eat food to recover salt (you have heard that salt retains fluids).
- 10) He realizes what he hears.
- 11) Look for water, because it leaves puddles on the floor.



Of the processes described to regain stability, only some can truly stop after the loss of consciousness and others that continue to take place but cannot be stopped because that would amount to dying. In this way, this can be classified as the restart of a machine that what it occupies is to recover some energy and obtain some water to work again. It is clear that during a fainting all the senses are turned off and do not work until the subject wakes up.

### **The functions of the body**

The functions of seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling can only be stopped when a person dies, sleeps or faints, this last situation is what the character named Wilfred is subjected to. On the other hand, it seems that breathing and blood circulation are processes that become conscious, that is, as if Wilfred could regulate them. This seems to be the case if the phrases that express it are taken literally. Breathing is produced by the signal your consciousness receives. But where does it get that signal from? If it is supposed to be the conscience itself that should emit it. In this case, it seems that there is a separation between body and mind and the one that emits the signals is the body and the one that receives them is the consciousness. Between body and mind, who or what is Wilfred?, mind or body or body and mind? This separation would explain the subsequent description of some parts of the body and their functions in the third person, which gives an idea that they are not part of Wilfred because he is only consciousness. But, although there is this glimpse of separation between body and mind at the beginning of the text, later and after recovering all the functions and senses they become unconscious, their body works normally again.

This first part of the story contains an intertext of Descartes with his famous phrase "I think, therefore I am", but the narrator questions the result of thinking, because it is not thought that gives the idea of existence, but the act of breathing. But it can be better understood why this questioned phrase is used if a fragment of Descartes from *Metaphysical Meditations* is quoted:

And even though, perhaps, or rather, certainly, as I will say later, I have a body to which I am closely attached, however, since on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, according to which I am something that thinks and not extensive and, on the other hand, I have



a different idea of the body, according to which this is an extensive thing, which does not think, it is true that I, that is, my soul, by which I am what I am, is whole and truly different from my body, being able to be and exist without the body (Descartes, 2007, p. 178-179).

It is not literally that Descartes says that the body and the soul are divided, but that there is a perception about the body that allows us to think that they can be separated. Descartes posits that the soul can exist without the body (in the human being) and the body can exist without the soul (in animals). What the story would raise, then, when putting the phrase "I breathe. It is the first warning that my conscience receives... I think, then do I exist?" (Goñi, 2018, p. 55), would be that of a certain inability to separate soul and body. Thus, although Descartes claims that consciousness can exist without the body, for Wilfred being able to think is not enough to exist, since he seems to consider existence as the correlation between body and soul or consciousness. Consciousness is tied to the body, cannot be separated from it, and therefore consciousness is part of the elements that the human body needs to perform a normal life.

### **The body as a machine**

Descartes is one of the first thinkers who has left in writing the conception of the human body as a machine, author to which the story refers. Descartes' main goal, at least in the fifth part of *Discurso del Método*, was to refute the non-belief of God by analyzing and subsequently concluding the complexity of the body. He established that there could not be a body that in appearance could be like the human being, since God (or Nature), would have elaborated the human being with two characteristics incapable of being created by the human being himself: 1) The tongue and 2) The reason. What is interesting about this fifth part is the way in which Descartes describes the functions of the body and phrases such as "[...] factory of the nerves and muscles of the human body" (Descartes, 2006, p. 65) and "[...] automata or moving machines" (p. 66) that allow us to think of the human body as a machine.



In the story some phrases are used that surround around energy, which would serve to further argue the idea of the body as a machine. Metaphorized water appears as energy. If you lose water (sweat) you lose energy or if you hydrate then you gain energy. Below is a table with the phrases found in the text that allude to the perception of the body as a machine:

**Table 4.** Perception of the body as a machine.

Sentence	Perception of the body as a machine
"I need more water, I leave a puddle on the ground when walking" (Goñi, 2018, p. 57).	The verb "to specify" dissociates water to be understood as a human need. It is a verb that is used for what requires a machine and not a body.
"I hope that the energy lasts, that which escapes through the pores of the skin" (Goñi, 2018, p. 60).	Water, in the form of sweat, is perceived as energy. Sweat is being expressed in terms of energy. Water within the body is defined as energy.
"We stop squirting" (Goñi, 2018, p. 60).	They stop throwing water just like they stop throwing energy. "Squirt" is another verb associated with machines and not human beings.
"Edith activates and executes a good idea" (Goñi, 2018, p. 61).	After Edith recovers from dehydration, Wilfred describes how she activates. This phrase, by the verbs "activate" and "execute", makes Edith think of her as a machine.
"There are some more data that I repeat to myself as I order my thoughts" (Goñi, 2018, p. 62).	This phrase describes one more way in which the way memory works could be understood, as if the mind were a



	computer, in which data (thoughts and ideas) are introduced to organize them.
"We start walking, slowly to conserve energy" (Goñi, 2018, p. 63).	The verb "start" is used with machines when they start working or moving. Speed, in the context of the story, is negative, because it expends energy.
"Let's hope, the less oxygen we spend, the better" (Goñi, 2018, p. 68).	Oxygen is expressed as something that "wears out," as a machine would, in terms of a consumable.

Source: Own elaboration.

The sentences in the table no longer focus on the senses, nor on breathing nor on blood circulation. These phrases relate to thoughts and the importance of saving energy. Thoughts are catalogued by Wilfred as data that is executed and organized. Wilfred's phrase about his sister shows very clearly that the body works like a machine. The concept of energy, on the other hand, is essential in shaping the body. Since the first tools were created, such as a stick to hit or a stone to cut, the energy was supplied by the body that used it. With the advent of the industrial revolution, we can no longer observe not only the force produced by human bodies, but also the energy produced by coal. Until that time, there were only two energies, one that was produced by humans and another that was obtained by burning coal. To this day more energies can be counted and the one that has always been present is electricity, which is supplied in machines or electrical appliances. But it is not the fact that human energy has always been present that generates the discourse of the importance of saving it, but the importance that has been given to energy in a world in which much of life depends on it as it is, in the text, in the xxii century. The text expresses that without energy nothing works, not even the human body, that is why given the post-apocalyptic situation they face it is even more important that they know how to reserve and use it properly.



To better understand the relationship between the concepts of water and energy, we can cite the theory of Lakoff and Johnson (2009), who establish that the conceptual metaphor allows structuring one concept in terms of another. This relationship of concepts arose from the scientific paradigm and has subsequently been culturalized, since scientists, in order to express the structure, function and characteristics of electricity, took as a basis the concept of the liquid to structure the concept of electricity. This can be seen in phrases such as "electric current", "direct current", "direct current", "alternating current", among others. From this conceptualization of energy, structured in part in terms of the liquid, is that the way in which the concept of energy works within the story can be understood, where the liquid, if lost, is synonymous with losing energy.

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