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Discomfort Food: How a market for Synthetic Foods is being
assembled

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Abstract

This research follows the discursive productions of human actors in an assemblage that is creating a market for Synthetic Foods. This assemblage, which includes human actants referred to here as *The Movement*, is represented in two major empirical themes. First it is demonstrated how The Movement is attempting to immaterially disassemble conventional Animal Agriculture, by discursively cleaving it from the notion that it produces *natural* foods. Second it is shown how The Movement is constructing a new market for *natural* foods, where animal products are made without animals. The non-human actors of this assemblage are said to be enrolled but this belies the multiple levels of negotiation that are yet to take place. Through collecting and analysing the media productions of The Movement, the discursive performances and relational spaces that constitute this assemblage can be traced. Through tracing these material and immaterial practices the main argument developed here is that a market for Synthetic Foods is being culturally assembled in a series of discursive productions. The Movements discursive texts show an attempt to both, re-qualify what *natural* foods are said to be and then to simultaneously create a spectacle that fixes the identities of actors that supposedly produce them. This can be understood using a Cultural Economy approach which extends the argument by demonstrating that this market assemblage recombines nature with its binary other, culture, in a new way, to form a differently constituted world.

Keywords: cultural economy, assemblage, non-human, nature-culture binary, food, Animal Agriculture, cultured meat, synthetic foods, discourse.

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