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"Do guns kill people, or do people kill people?"

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"You are different with a gun in your hand; the gun is different with you holding it" (Latour, 1994: 33). The question of where to locate agency, in people or things, has long characterized debates about technology, in particular guns, by anthropologists. On the one hand, human-centered accounts see guns as merely tools through which people could use to meet predetermined human intentions. Therefore, just as the slogan of the US-based National Rifle Association shows, guns do not kill people but people do (Kivland, 2018: 355). On the other hand, materialists claim that guns could exert control over human actions and it is the guns that kill people (ibid.). Both of these arguments, however, ignore the entanglement of human and non-human actors and view technology and people as external to one another. Anthropologists such as Bruno Latour (1990: 103), in this case, move away from social and technological determinism and address this dichotomy by seeing technology as part of the actor-networks. In other words, technological objects (including guns) and human as a composite entity co-participates in action and transforms what both can do in the world. This essay builds from Latour's theory and discusses how people enter into relations with guns in particular and technology in general to act together. It argues that while people project socio-cultural meanings onto guns and other forms of technologies prior to their uses, technologies lay the material conditions that transform people's real-life actions. Although human and technology co-participate in the "killing of people" and bring about wider social impacts, we discern the underlying cultural factors that make the situation as a long-term problem. This might be the starting point of which we reimagine a future with technology.

From the outset, technological objects are products of the broader social and political contexts. People act on technology through attaching special meanings to technological objects so that they were used for conceivable purposes. Looking back to the American technological history, Langdon Winner (1980: 121) points that technological artifacts were deliberately built to achieve specific social effects. For example, the overpasses on Long Island (New York) designed by Robert Moses are "extraordinarily low," with only nine feet of clearance at the curb (ibid., 123). While such design would effectively discourage the presence of twelve-foot-tall buses on the parkways, the automobile-owning whites of "upper" and "comfortable middle classes" could easily use the parkways for recreation and commuting (ibid., 124). As a consequence, the racial minorities and low-income groups who usually used public transit were kept off the roads and could not get through the overpasses to access the Jones Beach, which situated at the other side of the Long Island Railroad (ibid.). Such design was not only an expression of Moses's own "social-class bias" and "racial prejudice," but also a derivative of a longstanding history of social inequality in the 20th century America (ibid.). Moreover, Cyrus McCormick's reaper manufacturing plant in the mid-1880s Chicago served to destruct the National Union of Iron Molders. Manned by unskilled

labour, this machine became the means through which McCormick battled with skilled workers who had organised the local union in Chicago (ibid., 125). Hence, both of these technologies show that they embody purposes far beyond their immediate uses. Technologies are shaped by human intentions when people endowed them with social and cultural meanings prior to their professed uses.

Algorithms constitute another example of which human acted on technology. Through R. Joshua Scannell's analysis of the *Minority Report*, we see how American predictive policing technologies were predicated on the racial capitalism (Scannell, 2019: 110-1). Leading policing programs translated "lived realities of oppression" into speculated likelihood of places and people who are "intrinsically threatening" to the broader public safety (ibid.). The working model of predictive policing started from an identification of "fragile neighbourhoods," where Black and Latinx neighbourhoods were primary targets of the police's "mission areas" (ibid., 115). The increase of policing in these areas, as a consequence, made Black and Latinx people constantly subscribed to traffic stops: in 2016, Arlington police reported that "African and Hispanic" motorists combined contributed 56% of stops in the county (ibid., 114). In France, the i2 Analyst Notebook's lists-plus-algorithm was used for surveillance and control following the 2015 Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack. Noted by Kyle Kubler (2017: 4), the major role of this technology was to "translate probable associations between people" into "actionable security decisions." The data sorting and mining capabilities of i2AN enabled French polices to conduct frequent house raids and arrests during the state of emergency, with Muslims being their primary target. In both cases, policing technologies have been used for the exercise of state power and racial discrimination because of their creators' racist inclinations and its embeddedness in socio-cultural structures.

In a similar vein, the symbolic meaning of guns as violent subjectivities emerged from particular historical and cultural contexts. In the case of widespread gun violence in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the ways in which past generations had employed guns made them "symbols of sovereignty" that can "instill feelings of energy and power in those who wield them" (Kivland, 2018: 355). Here, gun possession had long symbolized the "the empowerment of common people" which stems from its history of sovereignty (ibid., 358). In the Haitian revolutionary war of 1804, revolutionary generals distributed 30,000 flintlock weapons among former slaves to symbolize their new status as "citizens" who were then able to "defend against invading forces" (ibid.). Moreover, gun possession could induce senses of power and control as gun usage was once limited to those militiamen who implemented law and order during the time of the Duvalier dictatorship (1957-1986). Section chiefs equipped with "identification card, uniform, the .38 special caliber Smith and Wesson revolver (the standard-issue gun used by police in the United States)" enjoyed supreme rights over rural village management, abusing and killing innocent residents with their guns (ibid.). For contemporary Haitian armed base leaders, gun possession thus became a manifestation of state power (ibid.). As is shown by the slogan of a local armed base called Grand Black, wielding .38 conveyed a "forceful claim to sovereignty" against its land foes (ibid., 359). In a nutshell, historical and cultural narratives shaped the symbolic meanings of guns and more broadly the technology. People acted on technology in that the material potentials of technology were taken up through past scenarios of actions that people projected onto it.

While people give meanings to technologies, technologies in turn act on people through creating the conditions of possibilities that reshape the society. Guns, in particular, lay the material conditions for previously unthinkable actions and transform the ways how people would act. As already mentioned, the .38 has symbolised the sense of sovereignty and power in Haitian history. In reality, guns materialise such cultural embodiment and convert otherwise good people into agents of dominance and violence. Nadine, an unemployed mother of a young boy living in the poor neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince, reports the story of how her two deceased friends were turned into *chèfs* and committed to violence once they touched the gun (Kivland, 2018: 356). At first hand, they were among those people who helped to build barriers in order to keep threats out (ibid.). However, as they acquired a gun, they became threats themselves by founding an armed base and began shooting their land foes (ibid.). As Kivland puts it, guns "alter senses of self and agency," driving those who possess them to perform "particular acts of power and violence" (ibid., 355-8). In a sense, guns acted on people as they inspired ideas that might have been otherwise unthinkable. When entangling with people, the violent potentials associated with the gun promote ideas and impulses in those who interact with it, which thereby led to the killing of people.

On a broader level, technologies transformed people as they mediate and reinvent existing social and political structures. Infrastructures as important technological systems illustrate how technology might reconfigure the state-society relations. As P. Harvey and H. Knox's research on Peru's road-building projects shows, while roads are supposed to be "technologies of integration," failing road construction programmes envisage disintegrated relations between citizens and the state (Harvey and Knox, 2012: 530). The building of roads in the history of Peru has always promised possibilities of creating a "polity which would hold together" facing "external demands from international markets" as well as "threat of internal divisions" from unruly populations (ibid.). Thus, when the journalist revealed on the TV screen how the previous construction consortium was in court under "charges of corruption" and the "section of road" that had been built was actually "falling apart at the seams," he invoked people's disillusionment with state agencies in the face of fraud and corruption (ibid., 529). In brief, infrastructures operate as technologies which materialise state presence in people's lives, since they embody people's visions and expectations about the future. The breakdown of such technological systems, however, prompts people to question the state capacity of performing its role and remake the state anew.

Thus far, we are able to notice that human and technology co-participate in action and bring about the "killing of people" and, more broadly, socio-political consequences. Yet when we try to attribute blames and responsibilities to human and material factors, we will find that it is the socioeconomic and political conditions that produce these situations as long-term and intractable problems. The displacement caused by the levee breakdown during the 2005 Hurricane Katrina sheds light on this issue, where the roots of the prolonged displacement lie in the social arrangements that allow the smooth functioning of the so-called "disaster capitalism" (Adams et al., 2009). The collapse of infrastructure provided the ground for initiating "new social contracts" in which disasters were made "profitable" as a new source of capital (ibid., 624). On the one hand, previous homeowners found themselves extremely hard to get access to loans for home reconstruction. Property owners often went through complex procedures before they finally received the fund, and the funding programs allocated loans discriminately even among those people who sustained the same amount of damage (ibid., 625). On

the other hand, the government prioritised private-sector contracts over the continued support of social welfare in response to the "disaster capitalism" that had become national directives since the Bush administration (ibid., 630). As a result, most of the former residents of New Orleans were still suffering long-term displacement and disruption years after the levee failure; those who used to live in public housing or rented homes were even placed in Federal Emergency Management Agency trailer parks far outside the city (ibid., 616). In short, while technological breakdown was the direct cause for displacement of New Orleans, it is the ineffective socioeconomic mechanisms that left the trauma unsolved and extended the problem into the future. This also applies to our understanding of the lasting gun violence in Haiti. Thinking the human-gun agency in culturally specific ways helps anthropologists to identify how gun violence remains an ongoing problem.

On the basis of this, the last part of this essay moves to illuminate how we might take advantage of the seemingly endless cycle of human-technology entanglement and alleviate the devastating impact brought by it. For instance, as we have suggested, technologies such as algorithms are shaped by their creators' racist inclinations and can reinvent expressions of racism. A race-conscious perspective thus leads us to subvert these technologies so as to undermine racial inequalities. In Australia, social media became the platform through which Aboriginal populations express indigenous politics, culture and identity (Fisher, 2019). In Brisbane, a young woman sets up an indigenous radio request program which weaved together the speech of her caller with the lyrics of country songs (ibid.). In this program, songs as pointed messages between family and friends become important means of connection among indigenous people (ibid.). In Fisher's words, this links indigenous people up in a "broader political coalition" in "assertion of Aboriginal rights" (ibid.). At the same time, the White Collar Crime Early Warning System, a parody project of predictive policing, contributes another example of which human-technology composite works together to recreate public sphere (Benjamin, 2019: 5). With its aim to subvert the anti-black logics in predictive policing, this system creates a heat map which flags city blocks where financial crimes are likely to take place, and not surprisingly, "white and male" appear to be the "average face of a criminal" (ibid.). Thus, while policing technologies materialise the racism embedded in broader social and political contexts, people could reappropriate technologies by making existing biases explicit. In all, recognising the cultural factors for technology's material potentials and then subverting them might be the first step for people to create a better future with technology.

In conclusion, this essay has argued that people and technology as a composite entity co-participates in the "killing of people" and in bringing broader social effects. On the one hand, technologies as products of the broader contexts are shaped by human intentions when people attach particular socio-cultural meanings to them prior to their professed uses. The overpasses on Long Island and the reaper manufacturing plant in Chicago illustrate this point, as both technologies encompassed purposes beyond their immediate uses. Predictive policing in contemporary America and France also demonstrate how technologies might be used for surveilance and control over ethnic miniorities as a result of their creators' racial discriminations. Similarly, guns' violent potentials emerge from particular historical and cultural contexts; the fact that guns has long symbolised sovereignty and power makes them violent subjectivities before they are used for the killing of others. On the other hand, technologies act on people as they create the material conditions that reshape people and the society as a whole. In the case

of gun violence, guns with their symbolic meanings and material capabilities inspire ideas of killing and increase human strength, enabling people to kill people. This applies quite well to other forms of technologies such as infrastructures. With its symbolic and representational role for state rule, the breakdown of infrastructural projects undermines people's faith towards the state and leads them to question the government capability. Nevertheless, we should be cautious that while human and technology act together in bringing social impacts, the deep roots of such long-lasting problems as gun violence lie in the wider socio-cultural conditions. By thinking the human-technological agency in culturally specific ways, we might be able to figure out conditions of possibilities that give rise to its real-life consequences before subverting them.

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