Drones R'us and The Future of Violence

critical insights into the ways in which innovation may also expose and be complimented with a form of violence

Juan Gomez

Violence has evolved into something that we can now understand as being normal and present in many aspects of our regular lives in todays contemporary existence. The development of violence is closely related to the evolution of our strength, the will to continue training it is like a case bigorexia that in its last stage becomes addictive and converts to an aggressive attitude toward oneself and the others.

> *"Violence is distinguished by its instrumental character. Phenomenologically, it is close to strength, since the implements of violence, like all other tools, are designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural strength until, in the last stage of their development, they can substitute for it."* [1]

To hurt or kill someone does not require a fancy weapon like a futuristic laser gun, but for example machetes as seen in the genocide of 800,000 Tutsis by Hutus in only 100 days. A weapon can be defined as a tool for inflicting violence, within the definition tools/weapons such as knives, rifles, tanks and other warlike objects are being created have been created.

> *"As we define it, violence is a manifestation of the power to alter circumstances, against the will of others and to their detriment"* [2]

But what is the future of these devices in where technological advancement is clearly executed by private companies with an interest in selling them? Many of the violent devices created nowadays are directly produced by an urban user in mind as wars have shifted the usual scenarios to move to a more urban and connected context.

Citizen Soldiers or Urban Militia
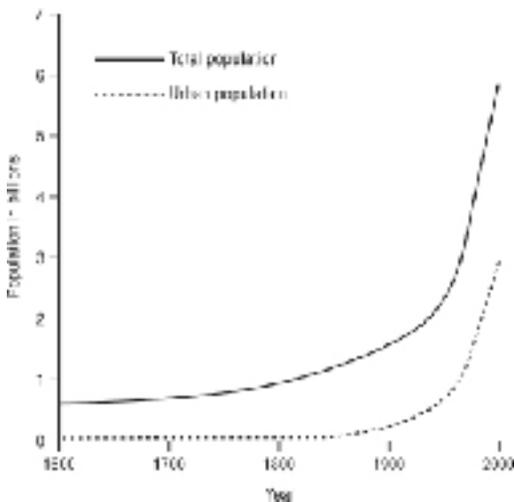
"Total world population, and total urban population, 1600–2000." [2]

As planet earth gets more populated and the urban population increments constantly the spaces for war are reduced and the amount of violence generated is less in rural areas. Concepts such as war 4.0 and others started to appear as citizen feels more involved in the outcomes of war such as the feeling of constant threat and the will to find means to defend themselves

> "*In the new military doctrine of asymmetric war – also labelled 'low-intensity conflict', 'netwar', the 'long war', or 'fourth-generation war' – the prosaic and everyday sites, circulations and spaces of the city are becoming the main 'battlespace'4 both at home and abroad.*" [3]

The speculations narratives of the future through the media channels create an effect in the population of constant insecurity which makes people search for mechanisms of defence. Techno progressive speech propose "security gadgets" that help feed the society with the feeling that they are more secure from the imaginary menace. As of every other other product commercialised in the post-consumerism era the dependance objectives are greatly obtained created a living way that seems

impossible without these devices and apparatuses or services.

In the same way that applications are used for a quick delivery, such as Rappi, Uber-Eats or other used for self placebo comfortable feeling such as Calm or Mindfulness there are also applications being used for fast protection in Brazil [4]

"Help your Government" Connected Tonfa at the service of individuals to help the police in riot in exchange of tax reduction and the feeling of security [5]

> "*Perhaps the most powerful series of civilian–military crossovers at the heart of the new military urbanism are being forged within cultures of virtual and electronic entertainment and corporate news.*" [5]

The anonymity that for some is one of the biggest reasons for people moving in a big city becomes their enemy as people with bad intentions sort necessarily need to inflict severe physical damage to the city

infrastructure but to the new "highways" of the modern urban agglomerations.

> *"Non-uniformed and largely indistinguishable from the city populace, non-state fighters, militia, insurgents and terrorists lurk invisibly thanks to the anonymity offered by the world's burgeoning cities (especially the fast-growing informal districts). They exploit and target the spiralling conduits and arteries which link modern cities: the Internet, YouTube, GPS technology, mobile phones, air travel, global tourism, international migration, port systems, global finance, even postal services and power grids."* [6]

Privatisation of self-defence

One could argue that terrorism is a highly codified and prepared state of violence which that involves strategic decisions for its effect to be measured.
Exceptional violence is not measured any more by the number of destroyed buildings or dead civilians, but by how drastically it changed the political machinery from all the convergent sides within the media to create particular destructive narratives inside a social organisation system.

> *"Terrorisms is measured by the the technical abilities from the enemy but on how far rotates the political script in an intended direction and towards a particular narrative"* [7]

This theatralisation in the act of post-violence in amplifying by the media in the same way as a theatre critic will create content around a piece to create the will for people to feel involved in the overall reaction and the collective opinion around it.

> *"Some scholars speak of the "theatre of terror." At the heart of the theatre metaphor is the audience. The media personnel are a bit like drama critics who convey information to the public.*

> *Furthermore, like good drama critics, the media also interpret the event."* [8]

In this scenario is where private security proposals are proposed to governments and individuals for them to feel more power and strength to fight against the various possible dangers imagined and boosted by the media. The boosted mechanism is also empowered by analytics and danger analysis algorithms highly influenced an bias by their owners and interests.

> *"Reading the memos, the options, the scenarios, the way percentages are ascribed to the potential risks and returns of contemplated actions, one sometimes has the impression that a computer, rather than 'decision-makers,' had been let loose in Southeast Asia. The problem-solvers did not judge; they calculated."* [9]

Authoritarian techno-politics

On the basis of defending the citizen the governmental instances find arguments for mass surveillance as well as diminishing the ego of the citizen on by installing complex mechanisms of communications to the state.

> *"Bureaucracy is the form of government in which everybody is deprived of political freedom, of the power to act; for the rule by Nobody is not no-rule, and where all are equally powerless we have a tyranny without a tyrant."* [10]

Investment in preventing violence by individuals has increased and many of the actual roles in defence are made by a mix of private entities and software developers in which the actual goal is profits and the selling of their weapons, erased that do not justify their means.

> *"The technical development of the implements of violence has now reached the point where no political goal could conceivably correspond to*

their destructive potential or justify their actual use in armed conflict. Hence, warfare... has lost much of its effectiveness and nearly all its glamour." [11]

As the members of the government decide on their strategy, only some of the key movement are shown to the public to install the show as in a roman a coliseum or a theater curtains hiding ropes.

"What is called authority is derived from those concrete forms and metaphors and relies upon them to instantiate it's theatrics..." [12]

Big data bio-metrics and other tracking instances are deployed and population accepts them easily by the same reasons they protect themselves created by the media and the theatre of terror.
Many of this surveillance practices are also argument by the means "maintaining" international outdated international treaties as well as problematic neoliberal platforms.

"Instead of legal or human rights and legal systems based on universal citizenship, these emerging security politics are founded on the profiling of individuals, places, behaviours, associations, and groups. Such practices assign these subjects risk categories based on their perceived association with violence, disruption or resistance against the dominant geographical orders sustaining global, neoliberal capitalism" [13]

Camouflaging violence

The representation of violence is not easy not make visible as it's aesthetics are camouflaged through techno-progressive speech but also by numerous design theories Ne example of this could be the H&D telephone in which the user gets called in times when it knows the user has free time to do data scouting via voice and using bribery and convincing techniques by giving the user

benefits in the use of the phone and discounts in stores; Affective design [14] is used here as a way to get information that will then be used again the user for marketing purposes that will later on be used against him.

H&D Phone, On & Off the Grid exhibition, Amsterdam

Ethics in design education in contemporary design education are not present and even some schools prepare their students to be "hired guns" for creating campaigns that inflict visual terrorism to the public.

Exceptional violence requires imagination and deep analysis of people and emotions, this is why one could argue the designers and creative workers have a good preparation for tackling violent acts in the same way as an art director will do when visualising the communication tactics in a publicity campaign for a brand against another one:

"Terrorisms we can say , is designed exceptional violence; designed for an

affect of fear.To redesign the city is response to the terrorist attack on to the city is to escalate the state of emergency into and endlessly vertiginous assignment....the proliferation of "provisional design "put forth to meet the temporary situation...but the emergency produced by the response to terrorism asks designers to accommodate their particular emergencies to normalise them by their compositions. ... But what is compliance when both terrorism and architecture are, in the best sense, projective disillusions, fictions that by their violence realise historical fact?" [15]

What do we imagine when we think of violence? The collective images on violence have a relationship to the movies and cultural products exposed that. The same way as video games of one person shooting are design in urban landscapes

This ethical relationship to design raises several questions. Does not design contribute to creating beauty and meaning? And if, under the guise of a beautiful appearance, it also showed what the human being is doing more ugly, that is to say, to put the other in danger in dismissive manners?

Talking about ethics and design one must cite Victor Papanek in Design for the Real World(1971) :

> *"There are professions more harmful than industrial design, but only a very few of them"* [16]

This dreadful statement also refers to the less glorious aspects of design, which would also contribute to the perpetration of certain human atrocities.

Violence in private life office = work?

IoT devices and communication devices such as cellphones are creating new usages, but also affecting in different ways the interaction with others.

For instance the use there are changes in the behaviour reported in many developed countries, these include sending abusive text messages or emails, making continuous threatening phone calls, spying on and monitoring victims through the use of tracking systems, abusing victims on social media sites, and sharing intimate photos of the victim without their consent ("revenge porn").

Technology is helping change the relationship we have to work to a certain degree of slavery. Now days with platforms like Fiver that promoted micro labor and the "gig economy" theres is a silent enemy entering the free time a there is now a thin line between the time working and time spent at home.

In 1969, Austrian architect Hans Hollein conceived the Mobile Büro 17, a portable inflatable office, enclosed in a suitcase. Even though this product was not launched the premises of products like this to generate productivity are evident now days with all the apps for time efficiency and organising yourself which hide inside the will to make you work more making addition to labor activities.

Mobile Büro (1969)

1 —Hannah Arendt, On Violence, 145

2 — From "Design Violence" catalog, Paola Antonelli 2015

3 —Excerpt From: Stephen Graham. "Cities Under Siege.

4 — https://www.arte.tv/fr/videos/077878-000-A/une-application-contre-la-violence/

5 —helpyourgovernment.com

6 —Excerpt From: Stephen Graham. "Cities Under Siege."

7 —Dispute plan to prevent future luxury constitution Benjamin H. Bratton

8 — http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/1579/1734/

9 —Hannah Arendt, Lying in Politics, 37

10 —Hannah Arendt, On Violence, p. 178

11 —Hannah Arendt, On Violence, 149

12 —Dispute plan to prevent future luxury constitution Benjamin H. Bratton

13 —Excerpt From: Stephen Graham. "Cities Under Siege."

14 —https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affective_design

15 —Dispute plan to prevent future luxury constitution Benjamin H. Bratton

16 — Victor Papanek, Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change, 24

17 —http://www.hollein.com/eng/Architecture/Nations/Austria/Mobiles-Buero-Mobile-Office