

Armed robotic systems emergence

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Résumé ou extrait : Extrait du résumé p. XIII-XIV : "The fielding of armed robotic systems--droids and drones that are teleoperated, semi-autonomous, and even autonomous--has been slowly but surely transitioning from pure science fiction into military reality on the battlefields of the early 21st century. These systems currently have no artificial intelligence (AI) whatsoever and, in most cases, are simply operated by soldiers (and on occasion terrorists and insurgents) utilizing hardline cables and laptop-like controllers, although wireless and satellite systems exist for the more sophisticated national armed drone programs. Near-term future prototypes are likely to have, at best, independent response capabilities similar to a trained animal, due to the incorporation of expert system programming. Projections out even further, however, have raised concerns that these emergent weapons systems, possessing semi-autonomous and autonomous capabilities, could ultimately have the potential to evolve beyond the machine stimulus and response level, eventually incorporating varying degrees of weak AI, and one day possibly even achieving a basic form of self-awareness. This monograph will initially discuss the weapons systems life cycles

analytical approach, which is militarily historical and qualitative in its methodology. This approach distinguishes between the experimental (entrepreneurial), institutionalized, ritualized, and satirized (or romanticized) phases that exist for an individual weapons system. It will then draw upon three case studies related to the knight, the battleship, and the tank in order to explain this militarily historical process and provide the needed context in which to strategically understand the expected trajectory that armed robotic systems may begin to progress through, if earlier weapons systems developmental patterns hold true. Given the U.S. Army's great reliance on armored forces in the modern era, special attention has been afforded to the tank. Not only is this weapons system undergoing its own process of life cycle phase progression into what can be argued is its ritualized phase, but it is also projected that, at some point in the future, armed robotic systems will be co-fielded in coordination with tank forces."

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