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# One Nation under Drones: Legality, Morality, and Utility of Unmanned Combat Systems

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Japanese soldiers and sailors on distant battlefields. *Gyokusai* objectifies fighting to the last while giving and accepting no quarter, and is sometimes used to describe the national annihilation many Japanese leaders advocated at the end of the war, which is the focus of the final chapter of Cleaver's book. (For more information on *gyokusai*, see Rodney James Szas, "Gyokusai" *Shattered like a Jewel: Last Stands of the Japanese Soldier in Their Own Words*, shatteredjewels.wordpress.com/.) Like most of the book, this last chapter ranges across time and space from sixteenth-century Nagasaki to an American pilot buzzing USS *Missouri* (BB 63) in Tokyo Bay. Analysis of war-ending decisions is limited and, in several cases, carries forward a singular view about the role of Russian entry into the war and its impact on American and Japanese decision-making without acknowledging counterviews on the subject.

Cleaver is an experienced author with over forty years of publishing experience and has written extensively on American naval air combat in the Pacific. The intended audience for this book is, however, hard to gauge. With a bibliography of only twenty secondary sources—Cleaver apparently consulted no primary sources—there is little revealing information or original analysis that might interest scholars and academics. At the same time, the choppy narrative and lack of connective tissue might well turn off casual readers. Naval air combat enthusiasts might find interest in the extensive air battle accounts, but, given the sources cited, these tales likely are presented in other fora.

JAMES P. MCGRATH III



*One Nation under Drones: Legality, Morality, and Utility of Unmanned Combat Systems*, ed. John E. Jackson. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2018. 256 pages. \$29.95.

"Something for everyone" are words that come to mind after reading *One Nation under Drones*. Americans have developed an avid interest in drones and unmanned aerial vehicles and their myriad potential uses. Scientists, historians, ethicists, and others are trying to determine not only the proper roles for this new technology but how to address the ethical, privacy, and related challenges this technology presents. *One Nation under Drones* takes all these factors into account while focusing on "how these revolutionary systems are reshaping the legal, ethical, and operational nature of both war and peace" (p. 21).

In addition to his introductory and concluding chapters, Jackson has compiled eleven chapters written by other experts in various aspects of the drone field. Taken together, they provide a truly comprehensive overview of, as the subtitle implies, the legality, morality, and utility of unmanned combat systems. Noted techno-strategist P. W. Singer joins his New America Foundation colleague Konstantin Kakaes in an early chapter that addresses how the proliferation of drone technology has led to new questions in relation to military tactics, privacy laws, and airspace accident potential. Singer and Kakaes provide a useful backdrop for subsequent chapters.

For example, Dan Gettinger traces the growth of the existence of drones from home garage prototypes to the role drones now play in disaster response and border security—and, most importantly,

how they have become standard equipment for militaries around the world. From there, the other chapters further explore a range of military applications, including the U.S. Navy's use of unmanned systems on the surface of the seas, underwater, and in the skies above.

Other applications the authors consider include the 2018 Navy Ghost Fleet program, intended to develop "a 'fleet-integrated' operational prototype drone to fill a range of existing roles" (Arthur Holland Michel); how robotic weapons might constitute "the future of war" (Robert Sparrow and George R. Lucas); and the U.S. Marine Corps's use of drones (Robbin Laird). Other chapters address the law of armed conflict as it relates to drones as a weapon system (Christopher Ford), advantages of small unmanned systems (Dillon Patterson), and the international law aspects of drone operations (Michael Schmitt). Tied to the legal issues is the plight of the noncombatants discussed in Ron Arkin's chapter, which sees in the technology the promise of aiding "the plight of noncombatants through the judicious deployment of these robotic systems, if done carefully and thoughtfully" (p. 173).

Interestingly, Joseph Chapa—who teaches philosophy at the U.S. Air Force Academy—considers issues related to psychological distancing that remote pilots may experience. With traditional notions of self-defense absent, Chapa wonders whether these pilots might face a higher probability of moral injury.

Finally, Brian Wynne returns the reader to the civilian aspects of drones—seemingly a long way from the garage creation of drones noted in an earlier chapter. Wynne discusses the

role of drones in the current world in relation to law-enforcement support, search-and-rescue missions, advanced scientific research, humanitarian assistance, agriculture, real estate—and the ever-talked-about delivery services that unmanned systems are to provide to entities such as Amazon.

Jackson has sequenced this collection skillfully, so that going from one chapter to the next flows well, allowing the reader to connect the dots among the subjects discussed. Moreover, the contributors offer such a rich range of expertise in unmanned systems that it both highlights their differing perspectives and allows a reader to focus easily on the chapters most appealing to him or her.

Yet, while the book is comprehensive, it is a collection of various aspects of drone research and applications rather than an in-depth focus on any one aspect of unmanned systems. This might be considered a weakness by some experts in the drone field. At the same time it is also a strength, especially for those readers who are relatively new to the field and wish to acquire more knowledge.

Jackson and his fellow authors provide helpful perspective while explaining the deep-rooted values and concerns related to the use of drones. No one can leave *One Nation under Drones* without having his or her presuppositions about drones challenged. This book is an invaluable summation of the current state of drones in the civilian and military sectors as well as the ethics attendant to their use. There is no better compendium of the thoughts of so many significant thinkers in the field. This well-written book makes for both informative and entertaining reading.

LUCIE-ANNE DIONNE-THOMAS