From ethics of robotics to ethics of robots: about some recent problems addressed by the use of autonomous robots

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Summary:

Today the use of quasi-autonomous or completely autonomous robots is increasing. It happens in the sphere of medicine (with systems which help physicians to take some crucial decision in intensive medicine), but also in finance where electronic traders are operating without any mediation of human actor. It takes an extreme importance in the fields of security and defense where autonomous drones are used to keep watch on border, on battlefield or even to shoot automatically on some targets. Many legal and moral questions are addressed by the use of such systems to which politicians, economists or officers delegate some important decision power. This is complicated by the fact that some engineers have recently proposed to solve these ethical problems by simply implementing in robots "ethical software", programs which are intended to algorithmically assess robot decision. We are entering here in the field of what is called "moral machines". The talk will give a survey of the use of autonomous robots and will try to make some legal and ethical critical reflexions about the concept of "moral machine".