

Macron is wrong; autonomous bombs; after victory what?

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Photo credit: [Lorie Shaull, Flickr Creative Commons](#)

Academic Articles

[Moral Triage](#)

Taking a moral view may serve the domestic politics or diplomatic agendas of those in power. As a result, nations and non-state actors might raise their moral voices readily and quite often. However, such overexposure serves only to undermine the moral voice and squanders the moral capital states have. Nations, and the world, would be much better

served if they exercised their moral voices much more sparingly—and in particular if they focused in on those situations in which they can do the most good. Discernment, and the framework to allow this, is what’s needed. In short, moral triage is called for.

Published in *Providence*; [click here](#) for the full text.

[Pros and Cons of Autonomous Weapons Systems](#)

Autonomous weapons systems and military robots are progressing from science fiction movies to designers’ drawing boards, to engineering laboratories, and to the battlefield. These machines have prompted a debate among military planners, roboticists, and ethicists about the development and deployment of weapons that can perform increasingly advanced functions, including targeting and application of force, with little or no human oversight.

Published in *Military Review*; [click here](#) for the full text.

Editorials

[How Macron Could Destroy the European Union](#)

Emmanuel Macron is calling for concentrating more power in the hands of “Brussels,” that is, in the hands of the European Commission. This is despite the fact that Britain is leaving the European Union because of popular rebellion against violations of national sovereignty by Brussels. One cannot have ever more economic and administrative integration on the EU level as long as the primary loyalty of most EU citizens is to their nation and not to the European Union. The line—millions are willing to die for their country, but no one is willing to die of the EU—says it all.

Published in *The National Interest*; [click here](#) to read the full article.

[The Day After: China Edition](#)

The U.S. is involved in a slow, Cuban-like missile crisis in dealing with North Korea, according to Harvard’s Graham Allison. The U.S. and North Korea are threatening each other with military strikes, including nuclear ones. Such a war is likely to draw in China. True, Allison stresses, no one seeks war; however, history shows that when we face the kinds of heated rhetoric and mutual threats we see now, war may well ensue. Remember how we got into WWI; note how close the U.S. and Soviet Union came to nuclear blows during the missile crisis.

Published in *The Diplomat*; [click here](#) to read the full article.

A modified version of this article was published in [The Huffington Post](#).

[Could a Theory on Bargaining Help the U.S. and China Solve the North Korean Issue?](#)

How can the salience-based bargaining method be applied to Sino-U.S. relations? First, both sides would need to rank their interests, although not necessarily publicly. It is probable that stopping additional development of the North Korean missile and nuclear program—and preferably rolling it back—is very high on the U.S.’ list for obvious reasons. The question then is what interest is salient enough for China to assume the high costs of pressuring North Korea to cap or cut back its program? And can the United States accommodate these interests at a low cost to itself?

Published in *China-US Focus*; [click here](#) for the full text.

[The Chinese Are Winning?](#)

In a recent [article](#) titled “Tortoise v Hare,” *The Economist* reveals (perhaps unwittingly) the ambivalence that many in the West feel about China’s rise. In this version of the parable, China is the tortoise, moving slowly but surely to win the race to become the global power. The U.S. is cast as the hare, with the Trump administration hopping erratically from one position to the next. The article observes, quite unambiguously, that “Aesop knew how this contest is likely to end.” China wins.

Published in *The Diplomat*; [click here](#) for the full text.

Recently Released: *Avoiding War with China*

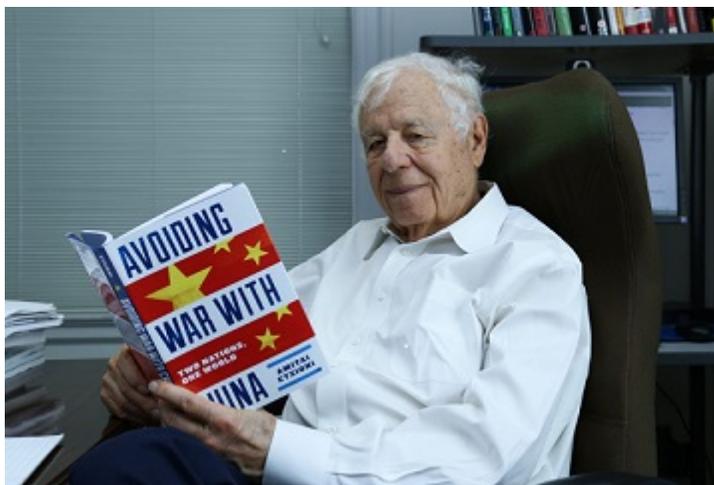


Photo credit: Keegan Mullen | Hatchet Staff Photographer

To read Shannon Tiezzi's interview about the book (published in *The Diplomat*), [click here](#).

For an excerpt of the book (published in *The Daily Beast*), [click here](#).

For more on this topic, [see Ambassador Chas Freeman's remarks](#) from a panel discussion with Michael Pillsbury and Amitai Etzioni on *Avoiding War With China*, which took place May 1 at the Elliott School of International Affairs. A [recording of the event](#) is available on

our YouTube channel.

Forthcoming Event

Conference: "Rethinking Responsibility in a Changing World"

Date: Sunday, June 4

Location: Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan

1:30 - 3:00 -- Plenary Session "Law, Policy, and Individual Moral Responsibility" (Amitai Etzioni a key speaker)

3:15 - 4:30 -- "Master Class" (on "Moral Dialogues")

Veblen Goods

The Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies is doing a study on Veblen goods. We are having a hard time finding research on the subject. We would appreciate any leads; please send them to icps@gwu.edu and consider passing this question on to others.

My Diary

Senator McCain's compelling call to keep the promotion of human rights as a core element of US foreign policy does not address the fact that this goal is noble but the means may be foul. There is a vast moral and prudential difference between promoting human rights with non-lethal means (such as public diplomacy, leadership training, cultural exchanges, and even smart sanctions)—and coercive regime change. Such changes often lead to very high human and economic costs. These could be considered as a price one must pay for liberty, but they often result in new, very unsavory governments.

Whatever reasons the US had for invading Iraq, it stayed to make Iraq into a liberal democracy. The human costs for the Iraqis have been horrendous. At least 25,000 people lost their lives and millions lost their homes. The Shia government supported militias acting as death squads against Sunnis, which has driven them to support ISIS. The military is so corrupt that often not enough funds are left for ammunition and food for the troops. In Libya, the humanitarian intervention morphed into a coercive regime change, leading to bloody civil war. The US ignored that the rebels it considered pro-democratic forces committed many of the same atrocities that Qaddafi's forces did, including ethnic cleansing. Afghanistan, after 16 years of democracy building, is one of the most corrupt nations in the world; it is a major source of heroin that floods central Asia and streams into Europe. Terrorism is rampant. The US has even been unable to stop the institutionalized pedophilia (called bacha bazi) of the governing Pashtun elites. One of the many reasons

the tragic war in Syria is continuing is that for years, the US insisted that Assad's departure be a precondition for negotiation.

Coercive regime change is also stands in the way of dealing with North Korea, China, and Russia. Recent statements that the US is out to change the regime in North Korea are sure to make the regime work even harder, if this is possible, to develop its nuclear arms and resist any negotiations. China and Russia feel that their allies are threatened as well as their own regimes.

In short, a strong case for the promotion of human rights needs to be coupled with a discussion on how it will be achieved. Avoiding coercive regime change and relying on non-lethal means seems a morally sound and wise foreign policy.

I Read

Jeffrey Gettleman's *New York Times* article "[Drinking Fanta With Islamic Militants](#)" provides a revealing report on radical Islam.

Max Boot's [review](#) of Condoleezza Rice's book *Democracy* opens with a quote from George W. Bush: "it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world." For work related to this idea, see "[The Case for Decoupled Arms Interventions](#)," published in *Global Policy*.

Amy Goldstein's book *Janesville: An American Story* focuses on those who lost their jobs after a Wisconsin city lost its General Motors plant. For more on this topic, see "[Communitarian Antidotes to Populism](#)," published in *Society*.

David Gregory, in his [review](#) of Abigail Pogrebin's book *My Jewish Year* in *The New York Times Book Review*, quoted Leon Wiesltier: "Our tradition doesn't care about whether you're sated, but about what you *do*."

[Amber Phillips and Juliet Eilperin](#) write that in his first public appearance since leaving office, former president Obama told his audience at the University of Chicago that "'special interests dominate the debates in Washington' and that getting involved in their communities is the best antidote to the divisiveness dominating the country's politics."

Thomas Heath writes in [The Washington Post](#) about an experiment in Sweden to test a six-hour work day: "A 23-month study at an elderly care facility in Gothenburg, Sweden's second-largest city, found that nurses — considered a high-stress profession — were happier, healthier and more energetic when working six-hour days instead of eight hours." For related work, see "[Politics and Culture in an Age of Austerity](#)," published in the *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*.

Tweets You May Have Missed

67% of the public think the Democratic party is out of touch. We need a committee for the defense of democracy

Let those who would refuse a \$400k speaking fee cast the first stone.

News reports say Russia is arming the Taliban. I wonder where they got that idea. Remember the Mujahedin?!

Best line from Science March: There is no Planet B!

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