



Volume V • Edition I

The
Podium

March 2020



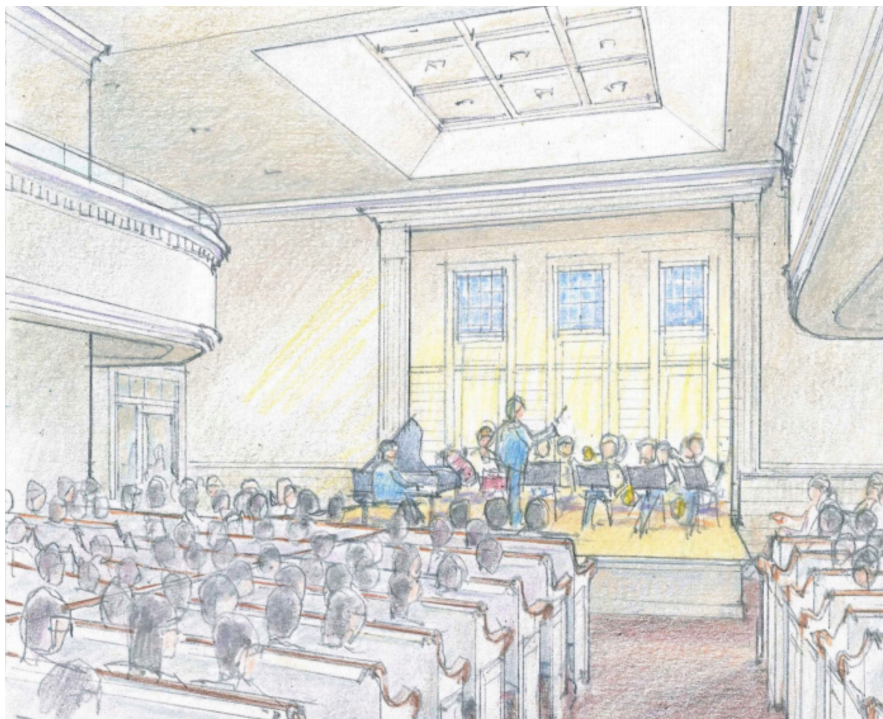
An important note: All opinions and ideas expressed in The Podium are the personal opinions and convictions of featured student writers and are not necessarily the opinions of The Podium staff, the Belmont Hill History Department, or the Belmont Hill School itself.

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The Interior of the Chapel after its remodel

Cover Design: Kevin Jiang '22



Letter from the Staff

Dear Reader,

Volume V - Edition I of the Podium Magazine is opening a new chapter for the school's longest publication, with all-new faces on staff to accompany the new cover design and layout. As a club, however, the Podium remains committed to sharing the most important events in modern politics and foreign affairs with the Belmont Hill community through the medium of student-written work. At the center of the school community is sound and engaging discourse between students and faculty, which the Podium staff seeks to promote in our magazine. The first edition of this new volume begins with a number of research essays nominated by Belmont Hill's History Department, spanning subjects from American-Iranian tensions, the current trade war with China, and extremism in Russian religion. And though not all could be included, all essays nominated to the Podium were particularly well-composed and included a broad range of interesting subjects (see Nominations Page).

This edition's winning op-ed piece, written by Sammy Jomaa '21, offers a sharp critique of the case offered by House prosecutorial managers and the handling of the two articles of impeachment before the commencement of the Senate trial. Entitled "They Blew It," the op-ed offers a different perspective on impeachment handling and how the case was presented.

Last, to conclude the edition, two essays written by Podium staff members (Lawrence Tang '22 and Charlie March '22) covered new ACT and SAT testing systems and analyzed the school-wide poll on the TikTok social media app and its state ties with China.

Luke Carroll '22 | President

Howard Huang '22, Kevin Jiang '22, and Abe Tolhoff '21 | Executive Heads of Design

Charles March '22, Thomas Madden '22, Owen Gerah '22, Luke Hogan '22, Will Seward '22, Gabe Klug '22, Lawrence Tang '22, and Morris Smith '22 | Executive Editors



Left to Right: Luke Hogan, William Seward, Tommy Madden, Kevin Jiang, Howard Huang, Gabe Klug, Luke Carroll, Lawrence Tang, Morris Smith, Abe Tokoff, Owen Gerah, and Charles March

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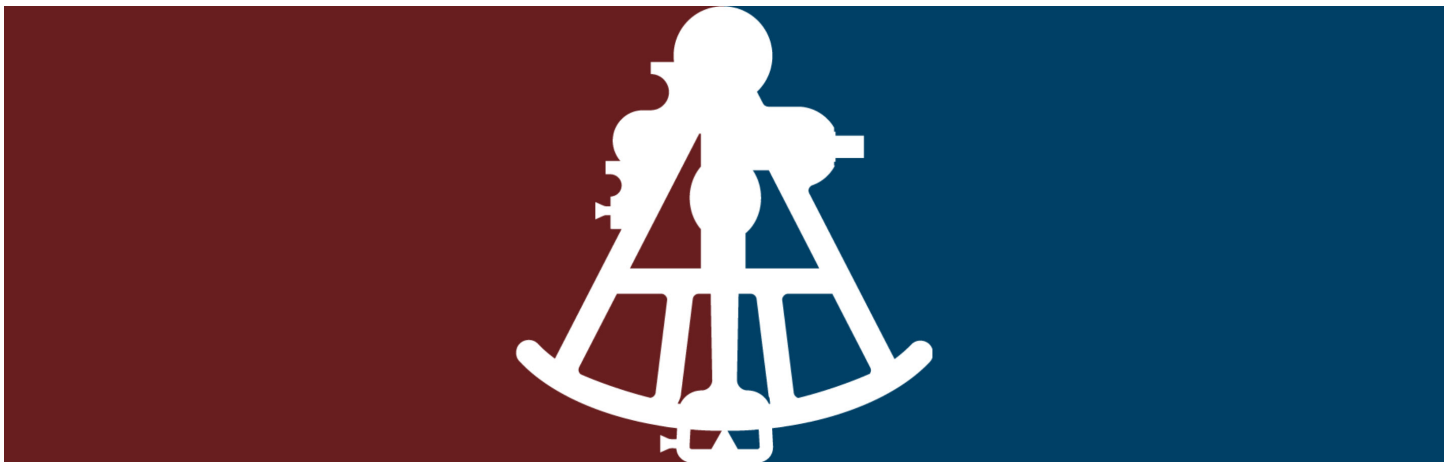
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Thank you to the History Department for their assistance in identifying strong essays and papers. Their dedication to The Podium is vital to the success of the final publication.

A stylized blue graphic of a classical column capital and base. The capital at the top has a wide, flat top with three horizontal lines. Below it is a central column with a decorative capital. The base at the bottom is a wide, trapezoidal shape with a single horizontal line near the top.

Opinion Pieces



They Blew It

Author-Sammy Jomaa '21
Section-Opinion Pieces

On February fifth, 2020, the third presidential impeachment in American history ended in the country's third presidential acquittal. Why? Some argue that the Senate acquitted President Trump since his alleged wrongdoings weren't impeachable - or even wrongdoings in the first place. Others argue that Senate Republicans, except for Senator Mitt Romney, voted to acquit the President because of partisanship, not the facts. While I favor the latter explanation, it misses one critical component: by prematurely ending their half of the impeachment process and by waiting several weeks to transmit the articles of impeachment to the Senate, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and the rest of the House Democratic Caucus gravely jeopardized their case.

Although President Trump was officially impeached on December 18th, 2019, the articles of impeachment against him were only sent to the Senate for his trial on January 15th, 2020. Speaker Pelosi justified this nearly month-long delay as an attempt to strong-arm the Senate into having a 'fair' trial of the President. The delay was, unsurprisingly, ineffective and even sympathetic senators, namely Senators Blumenthal, King, Jones, Feinstein and Murphy, weren't happy with the House's decision.

Besides drawing the ire of allied senators, the House's delay also undermined a key Democratic argument: that President Trump urgently needed to be impeached since he was a threat to the integrity of the 2020 election. This argument was used to justify the House's rapid impeachment of the President and thus the leaving of key witnesses and information un-subpoenaed. In doing so, they not only sent an unnecessarily weak case to the Senate, they gave Senate Republicans

the excuse they needed to vote against hearing witnesses: If the Democrats didn't think they were important enough to subpoena, why should we?

Worse still, by rushing the impeachment, House democrats lost the opportunity to include the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office's report that the President had violated the Impoundment Control Act by withholding congressionally-approved aid to Ukraine in the articles of impeachment. Needless to say, the inclusion of this report would have bolstered the House's case and forced Senate Republicans into approving an unappealing precedent where presidents can violate acts of Congress without reproach.

On the same day that Trump was acquitted by the Senate, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerry Nadler said that he would "likely" subpoena John Bolton, the President's National Security Advisor when Trump made his infamous Ukraine phone call. This begs an important question: Why didn't Representative Nadler do this before the House impeached the President? When it actually would have mattered? Unfortunately, there is no good answer to this question. Nor is there a good explanation for why Democrats delayed the transmission of the articles of impeachment to the Senate or why they sent an intentionally weak case to the Senate in the first place.

Would Trump have been removed if the House did their due diligence instead of making these unforced errors? Perhaps not, but it would have certainly been more likely. More so, they would have placed the blame on Trump's continued time in office, and all the damage that will cause, squarely on Republicans instead of split between both the Republicans' partisanship and their own incompetence.



Research Papers



Failure to Intimidate

Author-Jack Weldon '20

Section-Research Papers

Tensions between the United States and Iran have reached a fever pitch following the assassination of Iranian general Qassem Soleimani in Baghdad. President Donald Trump, who ordered the airstrike that killed the commander, insisted that Soleimani was “plotting imminent and sinister attacks” against Americans in Iraq. “Under my leadership, America’s policy is unambiguous,” Trump stated, “to terrorists who harm or intend to harm any American, we will find you; we will eliminate you.” Leaders in Iran, Iraq, and elsewhere have condemned the attack, and protests against the United States and the American embassy in Baghdad have spread across the region. The death of Soleimani marks a watershed moment in a series of escalating hostilities between the two nations as a potential war looms. The current hostility between the Trump administration and the Iranian government can be traced back to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA); attempting to force renegotiation via sanctions, Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal in 2018. Since this decision, the two countries have been engaged in an economic and military standoff as Trump seeks new terms.

The present conflict between the United States and Iran stems back to their tumultuous relations in the latter half of the twentieth century. In an attempt to focus the power of nuclear energy away from weapons of mass destruction and towards peaceful efforts, President Eisenhower fostered the “Atoms for Peace” initiative. As a participant in the plan, Iran forswore advancing their nuclear capabilities for war, and in return the United States provided them with a nuclear reactor, 93% enriched uranium fuel, and fostered their nuclear program. In keeping with this trend, Iran committed to the

1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty a decade later, permitting the nation to build up their atomic capabilities if they continued their disengagement in nuclear weapon development.

Despite initially promising diplomacy, affairs between the two nations deteriorated rapidly with the onset of the 1979 Iranian Revolution and the subsequent hostage crisis. In 1980, as Iranian fundamentalists held 52 Americans hostage in the American Embassy in Tehran, the United States formally cut diplomatic ties with Iran, seized Iranian assets, and launched the failed rescue mission “Operation Eagle Claw”. Even after the end of the hostage crisis in 1981, tension did not decline. In 1984, America listed Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism; in 1988, the US warship Vincennes shot down an Iranian passenger plane over the Gulf, killing all 290 aboard. Throughout the beginning of the twenty-first century, hostile relations continued. In 2002, George W. Bush declared Iran as a part of the “axis of evil” alongside Iraq and North Korea while accusing them of possessing a secret nuclear weapons program.

However, promising signs of detente began to appear in 2006, when Washington indicated an interest in multilateral nuclear talks if Iran was willing to veritably halt nuclear enrichment. President Obama finally made headway when, in 2012, a new United States law permitted him to sanction foreign banks if they failed to reduce imports of Iranian oil. Facing a severe economic decline, Iran approached the bargaining table in 2013 and, alongside the United States and five other major United Nations powers, helped create the JCPOA, which has persisted until the present.



Throughout his presidential campaign, Donald Trump made a promise to do away with the JCPOA, which he called a terrible deal. In May of 2018, Trump withdrew from the pact and reimposed crippling economic sanctions on Iran. “I made it clear,” Trump stated, “that if the deal could not be fixed, the United States would no longer be a party to the agreement. The Iran deal is defective at its core.” The president supported his decision by pointing out the temporary nature of the agreement, as its limitations were set to expire in 2025 and 2030, as well as its narrow scope, since it did not cover ballistic missile development or Iran’s support of violent militias.

Iran called Trump’s decision “unacceptable” while the president called for sweeping changes from the Middle Eastern nation such as withdrawing from the Syrian war and dropping their nuclear program. With Tehran rejecting these commands, the Trump administration imposed a series of harsh economic sanctions spanning business, oil, banking, and steel. With tensions on the rise, the United States designated the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran as a “terrorist organization” in April of 2019, which Iran followed with an announcement that it would increase enriched uranium production against the mandates of the JCPOA. Over the course of the summer, the fall, and early winter of 2019, a series of attacks on United States military bases, tankers, and embassies fueled the hostilities between America and Iran and culminated in the killing of an American contractor in Baghdad on December 27th, 2019. This death resulted in Trump warning Iran that they will “be held fully responsible,” and on January 3rd, 2020, the United States assassinated Qassem Soleimani, leading to the present crisis.

The domestic reception to Trump’s actions has been similar to almost every other decision he has made during his presidency; he has received criticism from Democratic politicians and support from Republicans. Democratic Senator Chris Van Hollen of Maryland claimed that the Trump administration based their attack on faulty reports, while

Democratic primary candidate Joe Biden asserted that Trump “tossed a stick of dynamite on a tinderbox. On the other hand, Republicans celebrated what they viewed as a decisive action to kill Soleimani. Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina expressed his satisfaction that “we finally got a president who understands Iran is the cancer of the Middle East.”

By withdrawing from the nuclear deal, imposing crippling sanctions, killing a prominent political figure, and repeatedly acting aggressively against Iran, President Trump has created more conflict in an already volatile region and has failed in his objective of creating a new deal. The path forward lies not in further conflict and hard negotiation, but in the fostering of mutual respect between the two nations, such as that which began with the JCPOA, and the reestablishment of a mutually beneficial nuclear deal.

Trump’s withdrawal from the JCPOA was a critical mistake that directly led to the current conflict. The nuclear deal was internationally supported not only by allies of the United States, but also by powerful United Nations members such as Russia and China. Furthermore, despite Trump’s claims that Iran was not to be trusted, the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency repeatedly found Iran to be upholding their end of the pact. Iran’s commitment to the deal was clear; even after the United States withdrew, the nation continued to uphold their end of the bargain and only began to make statements against it after continued economic and military pressure from the Trump administration.

Trump undermined his argument that the JCPOA being finite was a problem by deciding to immediately withdraw from it. The president criticized the temporary nature of the deal, however, a temporary deal is better than no deal at all. Before the expiration dates of centrifuge use and nuclear enrichment, in 2025 and 2030 respectively, arrived, the United States could have worked with Iran and the rest of the United Nations in developing a permanent plan. By spurning the JCPOA,



instead of reaching his desired goal of renegotiation, Trump has simply reduced the time until Iran can legally begin producing nuclear weaponry to zero.

In its failure to bring Iran to the negotiation table, Trump's attempt to create a new nuclear deal resembles many other shortcomings of Trump's "hard-bargaining" foreign policy tactics. In a similar manner to his trade war with China, economic sanctions have not only failed to force Iran to create a new deal, but also created more animosity between the two nations and eroded any progress that had been made since the 2000s. It is clear that Iran will not simply surrender to the will of the United States; as Iranian President Hassan Rouhani stated in support of the decision to strike American-staffed bases in Iraq, "[Iran doesn't] retreat in the face of America. If America has committed a crime... it should know that it will receive a decisive response." Direct conflict between the US and Iran had been minimal since the enactment of the JCPOA; both the withdrawal from the nuclear deal and his economic sanctions have sparked a year of violence, bombings, and tension.

Furthermore, the killing of Qassem Soleimani, although it successfully prevented a dangerous and vicious military commander from further harming Americans, was ultimately a tactical blunder. Trump's strategy to reach the Iranian people as a bargaining chip against their "repressive regime" was a sound one, but by killing a prominent political figure, the president inadvertently created a martyr for the Iranian people to rally around. As Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut stated, "No matter how good it may feel that Qassem Soleimani is no longer alive, he likely will end up being more dangerous to the United States, our troops, and our allies, as a martyr than as a living, breathing military adversary." Trump's abrupt, unilateral choice to assassinate the commander is emblematic of a troublesome aspect of his foreign policymaking. Just as with the withdrawal of American troops from Syria, he did not consult experts or properly notify Congress, especially Democratic members, before executing his decision.

While the president customarily informs the "Gang of Eight", which includes prominent members of Congress, Trump only notified Republicans such as House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Senator Lindsey Graham. Eliot Engel, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, stated taking action without "involving Congress... is an affront to Congress' powers as a coequal branch of government." This action not only disregarded Congress, but was also clearly partisan. As a result of their recent conflict with the United States as well as the sustained pressure of the Trump administration's economic sanctions, Iran has bucked their commitment to the JCPOA. "Iran's nuclear program will have no limitations in production, including enrichment capacity," Tehran noted. Withdrawing from the JCPOA was a blunder; Trump's estimation that he could force Iran to renegotiate the nuclear deal through economic sanctions and saber-rattling has failed. Instead of continuing to improve the relationship between Washington and Tehran, the president's decisions have halted respectful proceedings and returned the two governments to the brink of war. The assassination and martyrdom of Soleimani led to even greater feelings of hatred towards the United States, sentiments of unity in Iran, and the recent Iranian air strikes on American-staffed military bases in Iraq. Instead of attempting to force international treaties to work the same way as a real estate deal, Trump should put more effort towards respectful negotiation with Iran to deescalate the conflict and rebuild a nuclear pact based in compromise. As Mohammed Javad Zarif, the Foreign Affairs Minister of Iran, put it: "try respect- it works!"

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Native American Education

Author-Richie McNamara '20

Section-Research Papers

Native Americans have been faced with countless problems regarding their culture since they first encountered European settlers. Due to the desire of lands and dominance by white settlers, the Natives were oppressed and unable to practice their beliefs as they wished. This history of enduring and fighting these issues is still present today, which the majority of people are still unaware of. Amongst all the difficulties which Natives are still facing, education emerges as one of the most prominent and pressing troubles. The impact of education dictates the future of society, and Native Americans are in dire need of reform to their schools. In order for this change to be made, people must be informed of the alarming education issue affecting Natives.

The topic of education for Natives has been debated heavily since the mid-1800s, beginning with the period of assimilation. The United States government issued a number of Indian boarding schools, with the intent of erasing Native culture. The motto for the boarding schools, specifically the Carlisle Indian School, was “Kill the Indian, Save the Man.” The phrase captures exactly the objective of the schools. These students would be dragged away from their Native families and forced to undergo an “American” education. There was absolutely no trace of Native culture in the schools. For example, the students would be coerced to cut their hair, abandon their tribal clothing, and not allowed to speak their Native language. The most damaging aspect of their education was the transition to teaching them in an “American” way, which differed completely from their tribal learning. The absence of Native culture in their teachings resulted in distress and unsuccessful learning, which is one of the root problems in today’s teachings as well. After the boarding schools failed, the United States government decided to give tribal nations control over their education. The Indian Education Act of 1972 and

the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 were both passed, which officially gave tribes the ability to oversee their education. This resulted in the birth of the Bureau of Indian Education, which is the main organization funding Native schools, and they teach the students in a unique way, tending to the needs of their cultures. From the passing of those two acts to today, around seventy percent of the 184 Bureau of Indian Education schools are controlled by tribes. However, only seven percent of the Native youth attend the Bureau of Indian Education schools, and the remaining Natives attend public schools. Therefore the majority of the Native youth attend schools that are not bound to teach using Native culture. Despite the major improvement in the education of Native Americans over the last two centuries, there are still major flaws within the teachings of their youth. The Native American students, who are often overlooked, unfortunately, present the worst academic outcomes of any group today.

The contemporary issue of poor Native American education results in the lack of opportunities for further education and economic prosperity. The inequality of Native American education stems from the absence of Native culture in schools, hesitation of improving the schools, and insufficient resources in schools.

Since ninety-three percent of Native youth learn in non-tribal public schools, these students are not surrounded by their cultures in a learning environment, which results in fewer successful futures. Currently, twenty-seven percent of Native American students speak a language at home, which is not practiced at school. This is six percent higher than the rest of the entire United States and has a major impact on the success of the students. Studies and previous history suggests that having tribal language and culture within a learning environment increases productivity



and success. The Rakaumanga School in New Zealand, along with other Indigenous communities, took the lead in incorporating Native language into their school and saw tremendous results in academic achievement, which shows that integrating culture into school helps the students. Another study conducted in an Arizona Indian community high school, during which language and specific aspects of Native culture were immersed into the curriculum, resulted in half of the graduating class continuing on to college and only losing two members due to dropping out. Although the results of studies and the positive results they have produced are important for understanding the impact Native culture has, anecdotal findings are very important in the improvement of education. In a report following five Native American student's educational experiences, the students revealed that their teachers were uneducated about their culture and unable to understand their frustrations. One of the students shared an excerpt of his most vivid memory, which was when he wrote a paper on the topic of whom he admired, but when he wrote about his brother, a medicine man, the teacher demanded that he changed the name to "ceremonial person" or she would fail the paper. The lack of tribal culture in schools does not adequately give Natives a positive learning experience, which many are trying to use for a successful career. The out-of-touch teachers and curriculum need to be changed in order to fix this issue and give Native Americans a proper chance to thrive in their communities.

The Bureau of Indian Education schools today are succeeding in integrating Native culture into their schools, but they have a large problem of needing to improve the conditions of the schools. Schools are deemed to be in "poor condition" if the repairs needed cost more than ten percent of the value of the entire school, and thirty-four percent of the Bureau of Indian Education schools meet this standard. A quarter of the schools have remained the same for over forty years, and the total cost of all the renovations needed for all one-hundred-eighty-four schools is over

nine-hundred million dollars. Over half of the schools do not have improved technology or computers needed to prepare the students for college or future jobs. This hesitation to improve the school environment continues to give Natives a disadvantage in developing the students. Without the proper high school education and opportunities, Native Americans are not able to fully optimize their potential in economic success, and a major change to repairing the schools is needed.

The greatest factor affecting Native youth in succeeding in post-graduation endeavors is the insufficient resources in schools. The courses available and standardized testing preparation is not suitable enough to have success in colleges. Only thirteen percent of Native Americans attained a bachelor's degree, which is much lower than the entire United States population at twenty-nine percent. Thirty-seven percent of Native American high schoolers have not taken math courses beyond Algebra II, which is more than double of all high school students. The students are often in schools with no Advanced Placement courses, as they are the least likely to attend a school with these conditions. Native students are half as likely to enroll in at least one Advanced Placement course compared to white students, and also score the lowest on all national tests than any other group. These advanced courses and tests are key to continuing education in college, and more importantly, being prepared to succeed. Only thirty-nine percent of Native college students in 2004 finished their bachelor's degree in six years, unlike sixty-two percent of whites. The prevalent struggles by Natives in high school and college can be mainly attributed to the lack of resources and preparation. The low rates of educational success will result in a continued struggle for their future careers. In 2006, 25-34-year-old Natives were making, on average, \$27,000 per year, compared to \$35,000 for the entire United States population. In regards to the educational problem for Natives, the Obama administration of 2014 comments, "This crisis has grave consequences for Native nations, who need an educated citizenry to



lead their governments, develop reservation economies, contribute to the social well-being of Native communities, and sustain Indian cultures.” Without improvement to the assets of Native American students, the future of their society is in danger.

The issue of Native American education in today’s society has been hindered by the exclusion of Native culture in schools, lack of improvement to the schools, and scarcity of resources in the schools, which in turn jeopardize the futures of the students. These issues have been recognized, and efforts have been made in order to improve the education system of Native Americans. Over one-thousand Native students have met with the Department of Education with the purpose of identifying the needs of the students and how to incorporate Native culture into school communities. The Memorandum of Agreement in 2014 stems from this meeting, which gives federal agencies a program of how to effectively include culture. Despite their findings, the effectiveness of their work is not high, due to the fact that schools struggle to balance the culture into the curriculum. In 2014, President Obama funded over one-hundred million dollars for the Bureau of Indian Education to make improvements to their schools, but not every school has seen advancement. One of the schools receiving no help in improving education, Havasupai, is even pursuing a lawsuit against the federal government, which would be a massive case for all Native schools. The Native American education issue is definitely gaining more acknowledgment and aid, but the results of this help are not strong enough. In the future, more steps should be taken to help Native youth. The Bureau of Indian Education schools need to have full control over all of their schools and make improvements to the quality of each, with the help of the federal government. All schools should be required to have a certain amount of advanced courses, resources available for national tests, and proper preparation for students’ future endeavors. These steps will be very hard to achieve, but without more effective solutions, Native American students will continue to

struggle wrongfully.

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Russia's New "Yarovaya Law"

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Section-Research Papers

The Russian state has had a tumultuous relationship with organized religion ever since the creation of the Soviet Union in 1922. Many high-ranking state officials believed that communism and religion could not co-exist, reflecting the opinion of Karl Marx. In 1909, 8 years before the Bolshevik Revolution, Lenin wrote, "Modern religions and churches, and each and every religious organization, [are] instruments of bourgeois reaction that serve to defend exploitation and to befuddle the working class." Lenin, along with many others, believed that organized religion was inherently bad and used as a tool to benefit the wealthy. Because of these views, the Soviet Union worked to eliminate organized religion in Russia. They confiscated church property, harassed people who believed in God, taught atheism in schools, and killed priests, especially those belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church. By 1938, 97% of Orthodox churches active in Russia in 1916 had been shut down. When Stalin came to power, he encouraged Orthodox Christianity to increase patriotism in Russia. By 1957, 22,000 Orthodox churches had been reactivated. When Stalin died, Nikita Khrushchev again tried to reduce the religion, and 17,000 churches were shut down within just the next two years. When the Soviet Union fell in 1989, the Russian Constitution made an effort to separate church and state and protect religious freedoms. By 1998, 52% of Russian identified themselves as Orthodox Christian. Since Putin came to power in 1999, he has encouraged Orthodoxy by commending the church in speeches and giving them a role in state politics.

In July of 2016, a set of amendments to an existing law called "on combating terrorism" were made to the Russian Constitution. These amendments, nicknamed the "Yarovaya Law" increase surveillance of online communication and place restrictions on a broad range of religious activities that can be deemed extreme. The amendments were

created and implemented under the guise of preventing terrorism. While this is one of the Law's goals, the amendments also seek to extend the state's power over people's lives and to strengthen the influence of the Orthodox Church.

The Yarovaya Law takes significant steps towards stopping terrorism. Under the Yarovaya Law, the penalty for terrorism and being associated with an extremist group is increased. A minimum jail time for founding an extremist group, funding terrorism, or being otherwise involved in terrorism is established by the Yarovaya Law as two years. There was no minimum punishment for these crimes before the Law. Committing a terrorist crime outside of Russia is now punishable by 15-20 years in prison. Moreover, failing to report a terrorist crime, encouraging terrorism, and ordering an act of terrorism have been made crimes punishable by jail time. Additionally, the Yarovaya Law significantly extends state surveillance. All internet and telephone communication must be recorded by an operator. If the state needs any surveillance information for an investigation or a preventative operation, operators are legally required to provide it. Part of the motivation for this legislation comes from the fact that, in recent years, Russia has been the victim of a great deal of terrorism. In September of 2004 when Chechen militants raided a school, taking hostages, which would eventually lead to the death of 300 people; in November 2009, 28 were killed in a suicide bombing with 130 more injured; in March of 2010, 40 were killed in a suicide bombing; in January of 2011, 37 were killed and 172 injured in a suicide bombing; in 2013, 42 were killed in two separate attacks. The amendments came specifically in response to the downing of a Russian passenger jet over Egypt which killed 244 people. By increasing the punishment for terrorism, the state looks to deter potential perpetrators. Having extended surveillance allows the state



to discover terrorist plots and prevent them. The official Russian government news outlet, TASS, reported that, in large part due to the greater surveillance, in 2018, 20 potential terrorist attacks were averted, and the spread of extremist propaganda on 64,000 internet sources was stopped. While this number is likely inflated, it still reflects the fact that Russian authorities have attempted to prevent terrorism and the spread of extremist ideology under the Yarovaya Law.

Although the legislation does attempt to avoid terrorism, the broad language used, and the fact that the word “extremism” is never explicitly defined allows for the punishment of divergent beliefs that are not necessarily violent or considered extremist in most other countries. Religions that are not one of Russia’s four “traditional” religions of Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism outlined in a 1997 law can now fall under the category of extremism. As a result, the amendments have banned Jehovah’s Witnesses and diminish the influence of other evangelist Christian denominations; earlier this year, a Danish citizen was imprisoned in Russia for confessing to be a Jehovah’s Witness. Article 1 of the law states that, “Citizens and legal entities are entitled to carry out missionary activity... [only] if they have a document issued by the governing body of a religious organization and confirming the authority to carry out missionary activity on behalf of a religious organization.” The term “missionary activity” is never defined, so this law has enabled the prosecution of people simply demonstrating their faith in public. With new authority granted by the Yarovaya Law, police have disrupted evangelist religious meetings to confirm their legality. An anonymous Russian Protestant pastor said, “There are practically no Protestants that haven’t been impacted by the law... every Sunday a police squad interrupts our services... We have had to pay several fines for ‘illegal missionary activity.’” The Yarovaya Law makes practicing most religions more difficult.

Although most organized religions are negatively impacted by this legislation, the

Russian Orthodox church has been unaffected. As of May 2019, 103 people and 56 organizations have been prosecuted under the Yarovaya Law for practicing their faith publicly. Of those, 89 were evangelist Christians, and none were Orthodox. The laws have not been enforced against Orthodox Christians whatsoever. By making it difficult to practice other faiths, the state has essentially coerced Russians to become Orthodox Christian. As a result, the Orthodox Church has grown in influence and believers. In 2012, 41% of Russians were Orthodox Christian. Now, around 75% of Russians identify as Orthodox Christian. This is in the political interest of Putin and the Russian state as it politically legitimizes him and creates a unified Russian national identity. Putin has aligned himself with traditional, family-centered Christian values, and implemented homophobic policies. These policies tend to be more popular among members of the Orthodox church, which “believes that homosexual behavior is a sin.” Putin himself is Orthodox Christian. By increasing membership in the Orthodox Church, Putin indirectly increases his own support. The spread of Orthodox Christianity and the minimization of minority religions also creates a more unified national identity among Russians. By denigrating minority religions, the state discredits influence from ideals not seen as Russian. As more Russians become Orthodox Christian, they see themselves more similar to their fellow Russians. These shared values and culture create a unified national identity which helps foster patriotism. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergei Lavrov, said concerning the Orthodox Church, “It is impossible to overestimate the contribution of the Primate of the Church to strengthening the positions of our Fatherland in the world and enhancing the international prestige of Russia.” Leaders of the Russian state see the spread of Orthodox Christianity as a way to enhance Russian status, so the state encourages Orthodoxy.

The Yarovaya Law also extends the state’s control over people’s lives. The amendments allow the state to control to an extent



what people believe and give the state power to eliminate dissension. Russians are pushed towards being Orthodox Christian and away from other faiths. Furthermore the Yarovaya Law allows the state to control art and destroy art that “incites religious hatred.” In recent years, multiple art exhibits have been shut down on these grounds, including one which was destroyed for displaying art that was mildly anti-Orthodox Christian. In addition to art, the state has banned certain religious texts and pieces of literature that discuss spirituality. The Russian state is able to essentially eliminate works that might inspire disagreement with state policies or the unofficial Russian religion of Orthodoxy. The Yarovaya Law also bans missionary work that “[encourages] citizens to refuse to fulfill civil obligations.” The amendments give the state power to obligate agreement with state policies. The Yarovaya Law seeks not only to prevent terrorism, but also to create a unified national identity, politically legitimize Putin, and to extend the state’s control over people’s lives. Although preventing terrorism and becoming more united can be a great benefit, these rewards come at a great cost. In order to obtain them, the Yarovaya Law strips individuals of religious freedoms and privacy. It is one of many reasons the Cato Institution ranked Russia 119th in human freedoms globally. The law deprives Russia of the diversity of belief and of opinion needed in a properly functioning democratic state and moves it a step closer to the totalitarianism experienced under the Soviet Union.

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Chinese Investment in Africa

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Section-Research Papers

Introduction

Since the beginning of the nation and until the 1600s, China imagined a world “of concentric circles in which China, known to Chinese then... as the ‘Middle Kingdom’, was at the center”. Since then, China’s contact with the “barbarians”, or foreign nations, has fluctuated as various dynasties have made their own foreign policy.. Recently, however, Beijing’s outlook has changed. The quintessence of Beijing’s recent developments within the global community was the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee:

[China’s global expansion] grew directly out of... the famous Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978 to engage in ‘reform and opening’. By the early 1990’s, there was a conscious government policy launched to encourage Chinese commercial firms to ‘go out’.

An appropriate case study for Beijing’s new foreign policy is Africa, where “The People’s Republic desperately needs Africa’s copious raw materials to fuel its colossal growth”. China’s contact with Africa was initiated by Ming Dynasty admiral Zheng He when he “extend the maritime and commercial influence of China throughout the regions bordering the Indian Ocean”. Zheng visited Africa on his fourth expedition, during which he came into contact with “towns along the east coast of Africa of what are now Somalia and Kenya and almost reached the Mozambique Channel”. However, as a result of new leadership, China soon deserted “looking beyond its borders”, and China’s foreign policy with regards to Africa was limited if at all present. However, this soon changed when Zhou Enlai, China’s “most prominent foreign affairs official of the period”, toured Africa in 1963 and 1964. However, the most noteworthy event with regards to Sino-African relations came in 2006, with the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit in Beijing:

[I]n the framework established at the November 2006 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) [China] is committed to doing even more... China agreed to send Chinese agricultural experts to Africa and to establish demonstration sites, committed to train fifteen thousand African professionals in three years beginning in 2007 - double the number of scholarships for African students - and to send several hundred Chinese young people to Africa by 2020.

Another important factor to consider is Taiwan. As a result of an increase in funding and investment, “African countries have benefited China in its ongoing efforts to reduce Taiwan’s international space”. In the United Nations, the votes of several African countries “ensure that whenever Taiwan applies for UN membership, it fails”. Regardless, the enormity of this relationship and the celerity with which this relationship has grown is astounding. In Nigeria, Zambia, and Sudan, huge infrastructure projects are being sold to impatient Chinese multinational corporations in order to gain access to their oil, fish, timber, and minerals. However, this relationship is anything but simple. Violence in the Niger Delta, substandard labor conditions in Zambia, and the complexities of working with a regime accused of genocide are all examples of how Beijing is learning that rapidly importing goods from Africa while still maintaining their desired global image will be much more complicated.

Chinese Investment in Infrastructure Projects in Nigeria

The developing relations between the Chinese government and the Nigerian government continue to grow in both magnitude and complexity. Following the Nigerian Civil War of 1967 and many subsequent oppressive regimes, Nigeria faced isolation from the international community. As a result, Nigerian

officials turned to China, a developing country with an overwhelming demand for resources, for economic aid. Concurrently, Nigeria is Africa's most populated country, indicating a vast "potential market size". From 2005 to 2019, China has spent \$44.65 billion in Nigeria in the form of investments or infrastructure contracts. Ever since trade between the two countries began, the Chinese frequently procure contracts for infrastructure projects in exchange for exploration licenses granted by the Nigerian government. In theory, these licenses would allow the Chinese to access Nigeria's plentiful supply of resources, such as oil, timber, and minerals, that the Chinese lack domestically. For example, in 2005, a state-owned Chinese petroleum company, PetroChina, was granted "with 30,000 barrels of oil per day for US\$800 million". Similarly, in 2006, Chinese President Hu Jintao "secured four oil drilling licenses in Nigeria and agreed to invest \$4 billion in oil and infrastructure development projects in Nigeria in return". These infrastructure projects provide the Nigerian people with energy, transportation, and, in theory, more jobs. In 2008, a Chinese-based construction company began building a railroad connecting Lagos and Kano. Furthermore, Lagos became the first destination for a Chinese airline earlier in 2006, a public manifestation of China's commitment to further relations in the future. Moreover, a Free Trade Zone was established in Lagos in 2006 but has yet to come to fruition. This Free Trade Zone would encourage trade between the two nations, as it is a location in which "investors and manufacturers can take advantage of tax breaks". However, despite the frequency and magnitude of trade between the two nations, economic advantages can appear lopsided. Chinese traders and investors have been "on the increase" because of the resources and lack of competition; however, there is no "corresponding number of Nigerian traders in China", which would make relations mutually beneficial. With that being said, a substantial number of Nigerians live in Hong Kong and Guangzhou, and some have called for the creation of a "Nigeria

town". However, in total, the Chinese import a small amount of oil from Nigeria, "but there is potential for growth since Nigeria possesses the world's fifth-largest reserves," a salient indication for Beijing. Nevertheless, continuing to grow Nigerian relation in a healthy way by employing the locals in its infrastructure and resource extraction projects will lead to an even more prosperous energy sector; "China's Century", as some have predicted, will be contingent upon China's relations with African countries.

Violence in the Niger Delta

Compounded with the increase in investment, Nigeria has also experienced a rise in the Chinese population; as of November, there is an estimated 30,000 Chinese living in the country. Not coincidentally, there has been an increase in violence against Chinese workers by Nigerian-based militias. After the visit by President Hu Jintao in 2006 described above, violent guerilla forces stated that "Chinese citizens found in oil installations will be treated as thieves"; subsequently, Chinese workers were kidnapped three times over the following two years. In addition, Boko Haram, a terrorist organization based in northeastern Nigeria and founded in 2002, has been terrorizing both Chinese workers and the locals in northern Nigeria. In May of 2014, members of Boko Haram kidnapped 10 Chinese workers from a worksite in Cameroon. Moreover, MEND, or the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, continues to kidnap expats, or temporary Chinese immigrant workers, on a weekly basis. Although Chinese economic interests are in danger because of these militias, Chinese arms suppliers have been taking advantage of the situation. After the U.S. Congress delayed sending aid to the Nigerians, the Chinese stepped in, selling missiles and fighter jets. Also, the Nigerian government purchased \$250 million from Chinese arms dealers worth of F-7 fighter jets, as well as numerous drones, in their fight against local militias such as Boko Haram and MEND. According to Chris Alden, author of *China in Africa*, it was Beijing's "willingness to sell arms in support of the Nigerian military

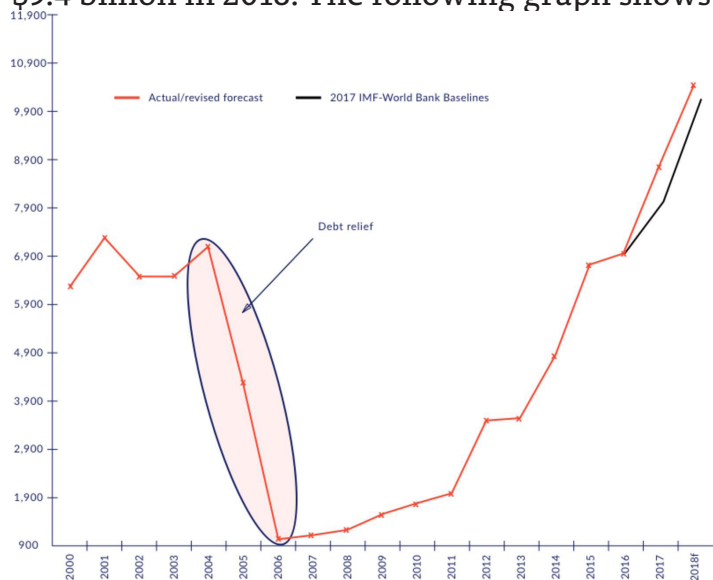


action in the Niger delta” that secured Chinese oil exploration contracts. By participating in the conflicts of the region, China is backtracking on their previous stance of strictly business-related ventures without military or political intervention.

Labor conditions and increased debt in Zambia

Known globally as a top exporter of minerals, Zambia’s copper industry has dominated the Zambian market ever since British colonization. For example, it was reported by the World Bank that copper accounted for 65 percent of the nation’s exports in 2015 and 11 percent of its GDP, or gross domestic product ; however, the handicaps of an un-diversified economy have not stopped the Chinese from investing. In 1997, the Zambian state-owned entities who owned the rights to copper extraction sold their possessions to private investors with the hope of privatization and increased investment from foreign investors. Some of these foreign investments came from China; for example, “in 1998, China Non-Ferrous Metals Mining Corporation (CNMC) purchased the copper mine in Chambishi for its subsidiary Non-Ferrous China Africa (NFCa)” ; “some \$132 million later, the mine reopened for production in 2003 after being dormant for 13 years.” Investment from Chinese businesses has proved advantageous in some areas; however, while the Chinese do augment many African nations’ infrastructure, the status quo has drawn criticism from international mostly in the form of infrastructure projects. Before the sale of its state-owned “parastatals”, a Tanzania-Zambia railway was instituted. In 2014, a hydroelectric dam in Lunzua, Zambia was also financed by China. According to the state-financed Xinhua agency in China, a modern international airport and a water supply improvement project had been financed by two Chinese firms, AVIC International Corp. and China National Complete Engineering Corp., as of April, 2019. While superficially seeming advantageous, these loans, as well as others financed by China - but also a significant number of loans by other countries - have contributed to an

alarming amount of public debt. In recent years, China has been accused of utilizing “debt trap diplomacy” , wherein Chinese firms would finance infrastructure projects which African countries covet and require, but cannot afford. Zambian public debt has been on the rise, but came to a brief cessation in 2005 because of debt relief funded by the World Bank and IMF. According to the Chr. Michelsen Institute, Zambian debt reached \$9.4 billion in 2018. The following graph shows



public debt over the years:

Vertical axis in US\$ millions

Zambia’s looming debt crisis is not the only reason for the rising anti-Chinese sentiment in the country. In a publication by the Human Rights Watch in 2011, Chinese extraction sites were heavily indicted for negligent safety standards so as to limit “dispensable” costs. The indictment focused particularly on four Zambian copper mines and subsidiaries of China Non-Ferrous Metals Mining Corporation (CNMC). A quote from the aforementioned publication demonstrates the extent of which local workers have been forced to work in unsafe and unconventional environments:

Miners from the Chinese-owned companies described consistently poor health and safety standards, including inadequate ventilation that can lead to serious lung diseases, the failure to replace workers’ damaged protective equipment, and routine threats to fire workers who refuse to work in unsafe



places underground.

The report issued from the Human Rights Watch includes 170 interviews, 95 of which include details and the experiences of miners from the four CNMC companies. An example of a personal account is the following:

It's difficult to handles these hours. We work 12 hours a day, five days, and 18 hours on the day of the change shift. It's very tiring.... And we never get a break; they say it's a continuous operation, so no break. It's very tough. If we eat, we have to while we work, or have a friend cover for a few minutes. There are times where you're just so tired. And after transport to and from work, it's 14 hours at least. My life is only my work here.

Although no commentators can agree on the exact inception of such dangerous business practices, the apex of violence between Chinese bosses and their subordinates is unanimously agreed upon. In 2005, an explosion occurred in an “explosives factory jointly owned by the Beijing General Institute for research and Metallurgy and the Non-Ferrous China-Africa Mining Company”, killing 52 workers. Also in a Chambishi mine was the confrontation of Chinese bosses and local workers protesting low wages; as a result of extreme escalation (and most likely reciprocal instigations), five workers were injured by gunfire. Perhaps most alarming is the efforts of “several Chinese operations [to] suppress workers' right to join the labor union of their choice and retaliate against outspoken union representatives”. Accounts from the publication describe threats of “deductions of monthly pay” or “termination” for attending union meetings, which argue on behalf of the workers to hold employers accountable in terms of pay and working environments. The resentment towards Chinese multinational corporations was pivotal in former Zambian president Michael Sata's campaign in 2011. As Chris Alden says in his book *China in Africa*, “As seen in Zambia... opposition politicians are starting to use discontent with China's role in the economy, and even the very presence of Chinese in

the country, as a gambit for winning political support among the population.” Many called for the Zambian government, in particular the Mines Safety Department, to be held accountable for these labor violations. The previously “understaffed [and] underfunded” Mines Safety Department has made some changes under the new government while working with Chinese multinationals, including the modification that miners “periodically receive personal protective equipment”, and that “first aid kits and ambulances have been added to respond to serious injuries”.

Zambia's Citizen Economic Empowerment Commission

Another facet of criticism from the international community is China's failure to include the indigenous population in its infrastructure projects. Chris Alden says the following in his book *China in Africa*:

In exchange for their countries' riches, African politicians have acquired dozens of new parliament buildings, presidential palaces and sports stadiums, all built virtually overnight by Chinese construction companies using Chinese labour numbered in hundreds (sometimes thousands) while unemployed Africans were ignored.

In response to the decrease in employment of the local, indigenous population by Chinese multinationals, the Zambian parliament passed the Citizen Economic Empowerment (CEE) Act in 2006, and is expected to continue until 2016. This came from the liberalization of the economy by former president Frederick Chiluba in 1991, which “placed much emphasis on providing an environment conducive to FDI”. Although “in theory new investors may lead to inclusion”, there soon proved to be a lack of “Zambian businesspeople available to seize the opportunities offered by the divestment program”. A basic definition for the CEE Act is “an integrated broad based and multifaceted strategy aimed at substantially increasing the meaningful participation of targeted citizens and companies in the economy and decreasing income inequalities”. Whether other African countries will follow suit in or-

der to respect the interests of its local citizens will be revealed with time.

Chinese interests in dictatorial Sudan

Most interestingly (and unlike other relations across the continent), China has been gifted by a connection dating back to the 1800s, which China has exploited in order to develop ties with the country. In 1862, General Charles “Chinese” Gordon was sent by Britain to Shanghai in order to consolidate British interests in the region. Again, in 1884, Gordon arrived in Sudan, where he was eventually killed by an attack in Khartoum by native rebels. Beijing has used this historic figure as the quintessence of “shared colonial oppression”. The outset of Sino-Sudanese relations are currently debated. Some, like journalist Daniel Large, argue that relations began with “Premier Zhou Enlai’s visit to Khartoum in 1964”; others say that it began when “the American multinational Chevron discovered oil in the south of the country” in 1978. Regardless, there has undebatable been a surge in Chinese intervention and infrastructure projects as a result of Chinese commitment to resource extraction; these include the “Chinese Engineering Works’ \$79 million contract to modernize Port Sudan”, and the “1,000 mile pipeline that pumps the black gold from the southwest of the country all the way to Port Sudan on the Red Sea”. As Chris Alden says in *China in Africa*, “a network of refineries, roads, railways, hydroelectric dams, gold mining and telecommunications has blossomed across the country... Tens of thousands of Chinese workers, technicians and managers have been brought in to build and run these massive infrastructure and industrial projects”. The most controversial of these infrastructure projects is the construction of the Merowe Dam, which has the energy capacity of 1.25 million kilowatts, which is twice the existing capacity of Sudan as a whole. However, the project has attracted some negative attention as it has resulted in the displacement of 50,000 locals. Furthermore, two additional projects are being arranged: the Kajbar Dam would generate approximately 360 megawatts and displace “more than 10,000 people”, while the Dal Dam

would generate approximately 400 megawatts and displace “5,000-10,000 people”. The following image illustrates either planned or



constructed dams in the area: Nevertheless, the most significant controversy is China’s supply of arms to Omar al-Bashir’s oppression regime, as well as the Sudanese leadership’s continued “protection provided by the threat of the Chinese veto in the UN Security Council”. Most recently, China’s position in Sudan received the most criticism during the conflict in Darfur, where the conflict between the Sudan Liberation Movement, the Justice and Equality Movement, and the al-Bashir regime have caused the death of 200,000 and the displacement of 2 million. According to co-authors Serge Michel and Michael Beuret of *China Safari: On the Trail of Beijing’s Expansion in Africa*, the Janjaweed, a local militia and proxy of al-Bashir’s regime in Darfur, “[are] equipped with Chinese-made weapons, among others, [and] had carte blanche to pillage, and very quickly the situation descended into a humanitarian tragedy, a tragedy long ignored by the international community”. The following image contains a list of the known arms transactions between China and Sudan from 2000 to 2009:

Known arms sales to Sudan

Since 2000	12 x Russian MiG 29 attack aircraft 15 x Russian Mi24P helicopter gunships 60 x Russian armoured personnel carriers
2003	20 x A-5C Chinese Fantan fighter bombers
2005	200 x Chinese Dongfeng military transport trucks 6 x K-8 Chinese military aircraft China reportedly negotiating 12 x FC1 fighter aircraft
2003-2006	\$55m Chinese small arms
2009	Russia reportedly negotiating to sell BTR-80A armoured personnel carriers and armoured equipment at UAE defence show.



Source: NATO Sitcen handbook

Equally disturbing is the “threat of the Chinese veto in the UN Security Council” in order to protect their investments in the region. According to Rebecca Tinsley in her publication titled *Breath of the Dragon*, “in March 2009, China vetoed a UN attempt to criticize Sudan for expelling humanitarian groups from Darfur as well as a subsequent effort to impose new economic sanctions”. In his book, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*, David Shambaugh writes, “Beijing has come under sharp international criticism for providing assistance to some of Africa’s most repressive and corrupt regimes, and thus undercutting efforts by other international donors to either ostracize such regimes or leverage ‘tied aid’ to implementation of specific domestic governance reforms”. However, following the reaction from Western NGO’s, informal cooperatives, and even American director Steven Spielberg, the Chinese government became wary of the threat of a potential boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Journalist Alexandra Cosima Budabin discusses Beijing’s subsequent actions concerning their role on the UN Security Council, writing the following:

On the UNSC, Beijing shifted its stance when Resolution 1768 came up for vote and laid aside its opposition to the proposed joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force. Moreover, Chinese leadership began publicly urging Khartoum to give entrance to the force. On July 31st, on the ultimate day

of its control of the UNSC, China signaled its support for the establishment of a 20,000-member UN-AU mission.

As was the case following violence in the Niger Delta, China began to notice that their opposition to military and political interference was irrational and impractical. Regardless, in recent developments, China has been taking an increasingly active role concerning the war-torn but oil-rich country of South Sudan. According to *The Diplomat*, South Sudan possesses “3.5 billion barrels’ worth of crude oil in proven reserves”. In 2011, the China National Petroleum Corporation secured an office in Juba, where they are still operating despite the rampant violence in the region.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Beijing’s economic investments can be interpreted in two ways: a “curse” that gives power to the corrupt and cripples the local impoverished population, or a “catalyst for development”, which buys contracts for infrastructure projects and gives jobs to the unemployed. The latter has arguably been the case in Chinese infrastructure developments in Nigeria, such as the railway constructed between Lagos and Kano, in Zambia, such as the hydroelectric dam in Lunzua, and in Sudan, for example, the expansion of Port Sudan. However, Chinese ventures have also been marked with the stigma of the “colonizer”. This includes their use of “debt entrapment” and substandard labor laws in Zambia, as well as the sale of weapons to the al-Bashir regime and Beijing’s use of the veto in the UNSC to protect such dictators. However, one could say that Beijing is simply “learning on the job”. After all, according to polling numbers indicating that “Africa shows the most positive perceptions of China anywhere in the world”, Beijing must be doing something right. If China succeeds in the coming years to include the indigenous peoples in their construction projects, to treat local workers fairly and with respect, to work with developing African countries to ease debt, and to confront dictators with the hope of gaining the appearance of a peacekeeping nation, the 21st century could truly be “China’s Century”.



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This journal article details certain dimensions of the relationship between China and Nigeria, including the Free Trade Zones, or FTZs, established throughout the country. This article also describes the current population numbers, as well as certain, specific details in the development of currently planned FTZs.

Alden, Chris. *China in Africa*. London [England]: Zed Books, 2007.

This book provided information on the origins of Sino-African relations, as well as different perspectives concerning how China’s intentions could be perceived. This source also provided specific details on each case study, particularly Sudan’s dictatorial regime and China’s complex role on the UN Security Council.

Bodetti, Austin. “How China Came to Dominate South Sudan’s Oil.” *The Diplomat*. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/02/how-china-came-to-dominate-south-sudans-oil/>.

This source detailed the most recent developments concerning Chinese motives in Sudan, as of 2019. It provided information concerning China’s current attraction to South Sudan’s mostly untouched oil preserves. It explained how China was willing to take these economic risks, without being daunted by the consequences concerning the heightened conflicts in the region.

Bosshard, Peter. “New Chinese Dam Project Fuels Ethnic Conflict in Sudan.” *International Rivers*. Last modified January 20, 2011. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.interna->

[tionalrivers.org/blogs/227/new-chinese-dam-project-fuels-ethnic-conflict-in-sudan](https://www.internationalrivers.org/blogs/227/new-chinese-dam-project-fuels-ethnic-conflict-in-sudan).

This website provided information concerning the Chinese (and other countries such as Germany and France) investment in dam projects. It provided figures for the potential capacity of such dams, as well as the humanitarian consequences.

Budabin, Alexandra Cosima. “Genocide Olympics: the campaign to pressure china over the Darfur conflict.” *CEU Political Science Journal* 4, no. 4 (2009): 520+. Gale Academic Onefile (accessed January 12, 2020). https://link-gale-com.libdb.belmont-hill.org/apps/doc/A220135950/AONE?u=molin_m_belhill&sid=AONE&xid=5737a02f.

This journal article described the current situation in Darfur, and how certain NGOs and informal groups (specifically the Save Darfur Coalition) were pressuring the Chinese government to take a different stance concerning Sudan. They did this, as the article went on to say, by articulating the threat of a potential boycott of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, which would have economic repercussions.

Dynamic, Mukete Beyongo. “Fighting the Race to the Bottom: Regulating Chinese Investment in Zambian Mines.” In *Disturbances in Heaven*, edited by Franceschini Ivan, Lin Kevin, and Loubere Nicholas, 112-15. Acton ACT, Australia: ANU Press, 2017. Accessed January 13, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1qlcrrk.23.

This journal article further corroborated the story of subpar labor conditions described in the article published by the Human Rights Watch. It provided an origin of the strong anti-Chinese sentiment pervading current Zambian culture and politics.

“General Charles Gordon (1833 - 1885).” BBC. Accessed January 12, 2020. http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/gordon_general_charles.shtml.

This biography published by the BBC described the life of General Charles “Chinese” Gordon, who provided the Chinese with



a personification of shared colonial oppression with Sudan.

Kirby, William. *China since 1644: A History through Primary Sources*. 2nd ed. Boston: Cheng & Tsui Company, 2014.

This book provided a reference to the origins of Sino-African relations, in particular the stance of China before the conversion to capitalism after the death of Chairman Mao.

Kragelund, Peter. "Bringing 'indigenous' Ownership Back: Chinese Presence and the Citizen Economic Empowerment Commission in Zambia." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 50, no. 3 (2012): 447-66. Accessed January 13, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/41653717. Copy

This article was central to the individual paragraph concerning the recent development in Zambia, in which a Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission was established to recognize the issue of the lack of indigenous representation in multinational corporations. This included the Chinese multinationals, providing a strong case study.

Large, Daniel. "China & the Contradictions of 'Non-Interference' in Sudan." *Review of African Political Economy* 35, no. 115 (2008): 93-106. Accessed January 13, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/20406479.

This journal article provided information specifically aimed toward the conflict in Sudan and Darfur. It analyzes how the Chinese manifesto of 'Non-Interference', and its respect for a nation's sovereignty, came under scrutiny because of Chinese involvement, and even arms sales and protection in the UN, in Sudanese politics.

Lo, Jung-pang. "Zheng He." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Last modified January 1, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Zheng-He>.

This *Encyclopaedia Britannica* biography described the life of Zheng He, a eunuch serving the Yongle administration. He was, as the biography would go on to say, one of, if not the first, sailors to come into contact with Africa's shores. This article was used because

of how the Chinese exploited these shared origins to burgeon ties between the two nations.

"Merowe Dam, Sudan." *International Rivers*. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.internationalrivers.org/campaigns/merowe-dam-sudan-0>.

This website gave information concerning the Merowe Dam project in Sudan. While largely recognized for its success in the energy sector, the main aspect of the article was the humanitarian subject of displacement.

Michel, Serge, Michel Beuret, and Paolo Woods. *China Safari: On the Trail of Beijing's Expansion in Africa*. Intl ed. New York: Nation Books, 2009.

This book provided the main case studies which were described in the paper above. It provided first-hand journalism of actual people and interviews which gave life to the issues being described. It detailed the infrastructure projects in Nigeria, the labor problems in Zambia, as well as the suspect ties with Sudan. It also provided a brief look into the origins of Sino-African relations.

Odeh, Lemuel Ekedegwa. "DYNAMICS OF CHINA-NIGERIA ECONOMIC RELATIONS SINCE 1971." *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 23 (2014): 150-62. Accessed January 13, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/24768946.

This journal article provided a look into China-Nigeria relations since 1971, which went back further than any previous source in its detail. It provides a hopeful outlook on the relationship, while still acknowledging the imbalance of trade between the two nations.

Ofstad, Arve, and Elling Tjønneland. "Zambia's Looming Debt Crisis – Is China to Blame?" *Christian Michelsen Institute*, 2019. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/6866-zambias-looming-debt-crisis-is-china-to-blame>.

This source provided the central information concerning the concept of "debt entrapment", which had not been described in detail in any previous source. Also obtained



from this source was a graph illustrating Zambian debt and how subsequent governments have undone the progress made by the IMF and World Bank.

Poindexter, Gregory. "Completion of 14.8-MW Lunzua, Zambia, Small Hydro Rehabilitation Part of US\$650 Million Project." *Renewable Energy World*. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.renewableenergyworld.com/2014/11/13/completion-of-14-8-mw-lunzua-zambia-small-hydro-rehabilitation-part-of-us650-million-project/#gref>.

This source provided information concerning the current infrastructure projects in Zambia, in particular the Hydroelectric Project, which were the main focus of the paper.

Roch, Max. "Zambia's Infrastructure Habit." *Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum*, November 12, 2018. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.omfif.org/2018/11/zambia-infrastructure-habit/>.

This source further corroborated the idea proposed in the Christian Michelsen Institute's description of Chinese employment of "debt entrapment", whether it was intentional or not.

Scissors, Derek. "China Global Investment Tracker." *American Enterprise Institute*. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.aei.org/china-global-investment-tracker/>.

This source provided figures concerning the investments made by China, in particular Nigeria. However, this source was not an article, but rather an interactive look into Chinese investments in the region.

Shambaugh, David. *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013.

This book provided the main details concerning China's seat on the UN Security Council, and how it was using this position to guard its economic interest in several regions, in particular Sudan. It also provided a poll describing how African sentiment towards China was in fact positive, offering a contra-

diction to what was said earlier in the paper, which allowed the reader to gain perspective.

South China Morning Post. "Boko Haram Suspected of Kidnapping Chinese Workers from Cameroon Camp." May 17, 2014. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1514329/boko-haram-kill-one-chinese-10-missing-cameroon>.

This Chinese source detailed the violence of the terrorist group, Boko Haram, in the Niger Delta. This was of importance because of the economic interests of Chinese investments in the region. This provided background information as to why Beijing was supplying the Nigerian government with arms to protect its interests in the region.

Sudan Tribune. "Merowe Dam: Pearl of Nile in Sudan." December 24, 2007. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.sudantribune.com/Merowe-Dam-Pearl-of-Nile-in-Sudan,25295>.

This source detailed the workings and figures of the Merowe Dam and its energy capacity. Unlike other sources which detailed the humanitarian downside of such a venture, this source described the project as a dream of the locals, as it would supply them with almost twice the existing energy capacity.

Tinsley, Rebecca. 2009. "Breath of the Dragon." *New Internationalist*, no. 423 (June): 12–13. <http://search.ebscohost.com.libdb.belmont-hill.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=39553838&site=ehost-live>.

This source detailed the events occurring in the Darfur region, as well as specific efforts by Beijing to protect its interests in Sudan by using its seat on the UN Security Council. It also detailed the efforts made by the Chinese to deny Taiwan international inclusion.

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This journal article detailed Sino-African relations with regard to Nigeria, including the specifics of the conflict in the Niger Delta with Boko Haram and the Movement for the



Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). Xinfeng, Li. "Key regions serve as measure for African security." Chinese Social Sciences Today [CSST] (China), December 19, 2019. NewsBank: Access World News. <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&docref=news/177F1A155FDE14C0>.

This journal article also details the conflict of the Niger Delta concerning the armed conflict between organizations such as Boko Haram and MEND against the Nigerian government. It also details how China has been supporting the Nigerian government with arms in order to protect its economic interests in the region, specifically its oil ventures.

Xinhua. "Zambia Hails Chinese Firms over Commitment to Infrastructure Projects." April 9, 2019. Accessed January 12, 2020. http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-04/09/c_137960775.htm.

This article provided perspective from a government-funded agency, Xinhua, and its stance on Sino-African relations. Specifically, it detailed infrastructure projects taking place in Zambia, including an airport and a water purification site.

"'You'll Be Fired If You Refuse' Labor Abuses in Zambia's Chinese State-owned Copper Mines." Human Rights Watch, November 4, 2011. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2011/11/04/youll-be-fired-if-you-refuse/labor-abuses-zambias-chinese-state-owned-copper-mines>.

This interesting article in the Human Rights Watch detailed the systemic abuses of labor laws by Chinese businesses, in particular copper mines. Its extensive reporting include some 170 interviews, including firsthand accounts from mine workers.

"Zambia: Workers Detail Abuse in Chinese-Owned Mines." Human Rights Watch, November 3, 2011. Accessed January 12, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/11/03/zambia-workers-detail-abuse-chinese-owned-mines>.

The main purpose of this source was to obtain a summary of the account given in the above source, as well as selected firsthand accounts pertaining to specific violations of Chinese businesses, which were used in the paper.

Zheng, Linsun. Berkshire Encyclopedia of China. Great Barrington, Massachusetts: Berkshire Publishing Group, 2016.

This reference source was used to gain information concerning the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), as well as arms deals made by Beijing to support al-Bashir's regime.

The Trade War: America vs. China

Author-Max Wagner '23

Section-Research Papers

On July 6th, 2018, President Trump began a trade war with China, which has lasted over six months, consisting of both sides placing successive tariffs on imported goods. China's only small hope for an end is a possible resolution based on a "phase one" deal signed in December 2018 between China and America that will decrease US tariffs on Chinese goods in exchange for China purchasing more American products. This deal also includes better protection for US intellectual property. The trade war has put China's already-slowing economy in an even-weaker position. It is one of the main reasons China needs change before it can become a real global superpower this century. Because of the economic effects of this trade war, China will not be able to continue to grow at the rate it has in the past. This slowing of growth will lead to the end of its rise to the top of the world. However, China possesses multiple paths to remedy this issue. It can change its practices away from manufacturing and towards higher-paying, service-based jobs, grow its tech sector to become less reliant on other countries, or make peace with Trump and America.

President Trump began this trade war by placing tariffs on Chinese goods in early 2018, but the two sides began fighting with each other in earnest in July 2018. Trump began the war because of massive trade deficits with China as well as possible intellectual property theft. That month, both the US and China placed tariffs on 34 billion dollars of each other's goods, with the US putting a 25% duty on them and China's tariffs being even higher. Since the initial tariffs, the two countries have fired back and forth, imposing higher and higher tariffs on each other in order to come out on top. However, neither side has experienced a positive economic impact from the war. First and foremost, China, which was once America's top trading partner, has fallen behind Canada and Mexico, decreasing its export power. The adverse effects of the trade

war on China become apparent are exemplified by the story of a food stall owner in Dongguan, which was once a manufacturing hub full of busy streets and open markets. Now, Song Guanghui, the previous owner of a bustling food stall, has to move away in order to keep making a living. He says, "One year ago, you probably couldn't even get through the crowd because it would be so busy. But right now, even the smallest vendors can't survive" Song once sold his food in an open market across from a shoe factory. However, as the trade war progresses, high-profit-margin finished goods like shoes become less and less profitable to manufacture. As a result, the factory has shut down, removing all the business in the markets in the once-busy town. Once, 70% of shoes going to America were from China, but now manufacturing is moving increasingly to Vietnam and Indonesia. China's overall exports to America have decreased by 12% since the beginning of the trade war, diminishing its most important source of income.

With China facing the threat of a trade war to its economy, there are a few possible paths forward to reconciling with other countries and getting its economy back on the track of its previous rapid growth. One of these ways is for China to move its workforce and economy away from low-skill, low-paying jobs like manufacturing towards technology or other high-skill sectors. One of the main reasons this change might be necessary is that China has a rapidly aging population. China will have over 330 million people over the age of 65 by the year 2050, and that number will continue to grow. Stuart Leckie, the chairman of Stirling Finance Ltd., a pension fund based consulting firm that has advised the Chinese government, says that the aging population is "the No. 1 economic problem for China going forward," suggesting its dire possible impacts on the country as a whole. If China continues on its current path in terms of population, it will peak at 1.44 billion people in 2029 then



enter a period of population decline. These numbers suggest that in 2065 China would return to population numbers similar to the mid-1990s. This decline is mainly due to the former “One Child Policy”, but recent efforts to increase the number of children born have had no effect because of the increasing costs of raising a child as middle-class wages stagnate in a rapidly growing economy. After an 8% increase in births in 2016, the rate fell back down again by 3.5% in the next year. As China continues to have a decrease in the working population, the rise in pension commitments drains the tax base. As a result, manufacturing will become even more impossible as a long-term source of income for China.

This effect is compounded by the fact that cheap manufacturing in China is quickly being surpassed by other developing countries. As China’s manufacturing grows increasingly expensive due to higher wages and a growing economy, manufacturing is moving more towards developing countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam. As a result, China’s rapid growth will slow down unless it can adapt to a changing situation. According to Taiwan’s Directorate-General of Budget, China’s exports of goods and services will grow only slightly in 2020 but will increase more in 2021. This growth will likely be because of growing global demand for technology such as 5G. China’s leadership in this new technology may be its main edge in the near future, and if it is the first country to develop 5G, it will be a global technology leader. However, the manufacturing sector, China’s current backbone of its economy, has slowed its growth for the sixth month in a row as of November 2019. In October, the industrial production sector in China grew by 4.7%, down from 5.8% in September. This was due to a drop in sales growth and the lowest investment in new factories in China has ever seen. After hitting the lowest GDP growth in 30 years in quarter three of 2019, it is believed that the October data pointed to even lower growth in the fourth quarter. Sophie Altermatt, an economic researcher, says “The disappointing October activity data suggests a further slowdown in the

fourth quarter cannot be avoided.” One key way for China to turn around its stagnating economy in the future will be technological advancement.

China’s tech sector is an important part of its path forward in the global economy. As it aims to grow less reliant on manufacturing, it has to upgrade its technological output in order to keep up with America and other global superpowers. One way China is doing this is by upgrading their high-tech industries in Pudong, a tech city near Shanghai. Pudong is set to be one of the main areas of tech sector growth, and it will focus on computer chips, pharmaceuticals, intelligent manufacturing, data science, and autonomous vehicles in 2020. Pudong’s goal for its tech industries is to pass 2 trillion yuan in revenue, or \$286 billion, in the next seven years. In 2018, Pudong reached 1 trillion yuan for the first time, over 160 times its 1990 economic value of 6 billion yuan before Pudong began to industrialize. Tech growth is a major part of China’s five-year plans from 2006 to 2020, and IT made up 4.4% of China’s GDP in 2013. This number is expected to grow by 2023 to the range of 7 to 22 percent of China’s GDP, making it one major sector of predicted growth for Beijing. As China tries to grow in a world where manufacturing becomes less efficient and profitable each year, it needs to move into the future of the economy rather than the past.

Despite China’s massive tech sector growth, it still has a few issues along the path to being a technological superpower. One of these barriers is that there is a lack of highly educated tech workers in China. However, steps are being taken to build new schools and revamp existing institutions in order to remedy this. The main issues in China’s tech sector relate to copyrights. Currently, China lacks laws surrounding technological copyrights, and smaller companies have a hard time surviving when tech giants can steal their technology and beat them to market, nullifying the work done to develop a startup. This effect is made even worse by the fact that the large tech giants of China are partially state funded and owned, incentivizing China to continue

its support for the already established companies. In addition, there is large competition for seed funding and educated workers among startups, which only exacerbates the issues that these small companies already face. As a result, Chinese startups will have issues being able to get off the ground until China institutes new copyright laws.

Another challenge facing the Chinese tech sector is increasing pressure from America about the theft of intellectual property. Many American companies have complained that they have had their technology stolen by Chinese companies. A March 2019 CNBC poll showed that one in five US companies has had intellectual property stolen by China. This has driven even the White House to speak out, with Trump labeling China as “one of the greatest threats in the history of the world,” and even going as far to say that China was “raping” the US economy. Peter Navarro, Trump’s economic-nationalist adviser, claimed that China is “the planet’s most efficient assassin.” The intellectual property theft performed by China is mostly for the larger companies, increasing the gap that needs to be closed between these giants and startups in China. The Commission on the Theft of American Intellectual Property estimates the total theft adds up to over \$600 billion per year. If China continues these practices, it will lose its legitimacy with other countries and limit the options for trade in the future

The CCP (Chinese Communist Party) is also heavily pressured by the trade war. As a political party that maintains power with promises of a revamped economy, if China was to stop its rapid growth, the CCP would lose legitimacy and its support from the people of China. As the CCP’s main base of power is built around its economic 5-year plans, if the trade war were to compromise the rapid growth of the Chinese economy, the party would lose its base of support. Economic weakness would likely lead to protests demanding political liberalization. As a result, China is in desperate need of a solution for the trade war. For this reason, the Chinese President Xi Jinping wants to resolve the trade war with America in a

peaceful and diplomatic way.

China and the US are currently going into a “phase one” of trade talks in order to resolve the trade war. As the US and China work towards a preliminary deal, they promise to decrease tariffs on each other, as the trade war has had negative effects on both sides. Both the US and China have agreed to decrease tariffs, as well as to meet again to further negotiate trade deals. China has agreed to purchase more soybeans, the main feed for pigs, after a decrease in soybean imports after an outbreak of Swine Flu in China killed a large number of pigs. China has also agreed to buy 40-50 billion dollars of agricultural goods from the US each year, which will relieve stress on US farmers. China will also increase purchases of farm and manufacturing goods. However, large tariffs are still on the table on both sides, and China’s intellectual property theft, one of the original reasons for starting the trade war, still looms over the agreements. China’s main and easiest path forward is to agree to halt its practices on the theft of intellectual property in order to come to a final agreement with the US.

China’s economic growth going into the 21st century and beyond heavily depends on its relations with global powers as well as its technological development. It will have to be willing to compromise with other countries in order to maintain its relations and allies around the world, especially America, its main rival for the top economy on the globe. In order for “China’s Century” to happen, it needs to continue growing its economy while also stimulating its tech sector by supporting large companies but also smaller, newer businesses that could contribute a lot to the country. As China moves towards higher-paying jobs, it needs to become independent in terms of its economy in order to succeed. China’s relations with America will be important to its future, and necessary to continued development. While China’s options for moving into the future seem restricted, it still can find a way through the barriers it faces in order to finally have its century on top.



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A stylized blue graphic of a computer monitor and keyboard. The monitor is at the top, with a wide base and a thin bezel. Below the monitor is a keyboard, represented by a series of rounded shapes. The entire graphic is centered on a dark blue background.

Data Analysis



ACT and SAT Superscoring

Author-Lawrence Tang '22
Section-Data Analysis

The ACT and the SAT have been, for a long time, benchmarks for most college applications. Some schools (and this number is growing) have made test scores optional for applications, but students often feel compelled to undergo testing and score highly. However, preparation for these tests is tough and time-consuming. The ACT has 4 sections: English, Reading, Math, and Science, as well as an optional writing test, all graded on a scale of 1-36. Starting in September of 2020, though, the ACT will allow students to take sections individually in order for students to improve their scores. Instead of sitting for three hours to take all sections, the change allows students to take sections individually and consequently avoiding getting worse scores on sections taken earlier.

Furthermore, the ACT board elected to give students a new “superscore,” combining all the highest scores from each time the test was taken. However, colleges have not made clear yet how they will evaluate applicants with a composite score from one exam versus a superscore over multiple exams. But, several schools already construct their own superscores based on past test scores. Many students and test experts are stating that this change will bring about improvement for most students because students will be able to study section by section, rather than studying all at the same time. However, other people state that this change will make the test-taking process more unhealthy for high-achieving students, as they will retest and retest certain sections to bump a 33 to a 34 or a 35 to a 36.

The Collegeboard, which creates the SAT, however, has not yet decided to make this change to its testing. The board has not yet made any hint at a change in policy in the direction of the ACT super-

score; however, the SAT in the past has quote on quote “copied” the ACT. The format and question type of the SAT over time became very much similar to the ACT. Thus, people have come to believe that SAT will soon make these changes as well.

In conclusion, the ACT board, and most likely the Collegeboard in the future, has decided to allow students to take sections individually and to superscore. Many test-takers will benefit from this change as they will not have to study all sections at once, and their test scores will be increased. This change that will be implemented will offer a good option for students in the future.

China and Social Media

Author-Charles March '22

Section-Data Analysis

All across the world, social media has been rising at meteoric rates over the past couple of years. Social media can be best defined as platforms (usually electronic) in which people can create, share, and observe all kinds of content in the world. Social media can be accessed on most electronics these days and is relatively easy to use, so almost any age can use it. Apps like Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok are top-rated. These apps let people connect with friends, keep up with the news, learn about their favorite celebrities' lives, and interact with strangers. In early February, a poll was sent out to the whole school with many questions regarding TikTok, social media's security of data, and the overall threat that China poses in the social media world.

Of all responses The Podium received, Form II had the most respondents, and Form VI had the least. A majority of the respondents (88%) use at least one type of social media, if not more than one. However, 98 percent of all respondents have heard of TikTok in some way, likely due to its increasing growth since the summer. Ninety percent of people know what TikTok is. TikTok is an app in which users can create funny short videos and post them for everyone else to watch. Fifty-two percent of respondents do not use TikTok, while 48 percent use it at least once a week, if not every single day.

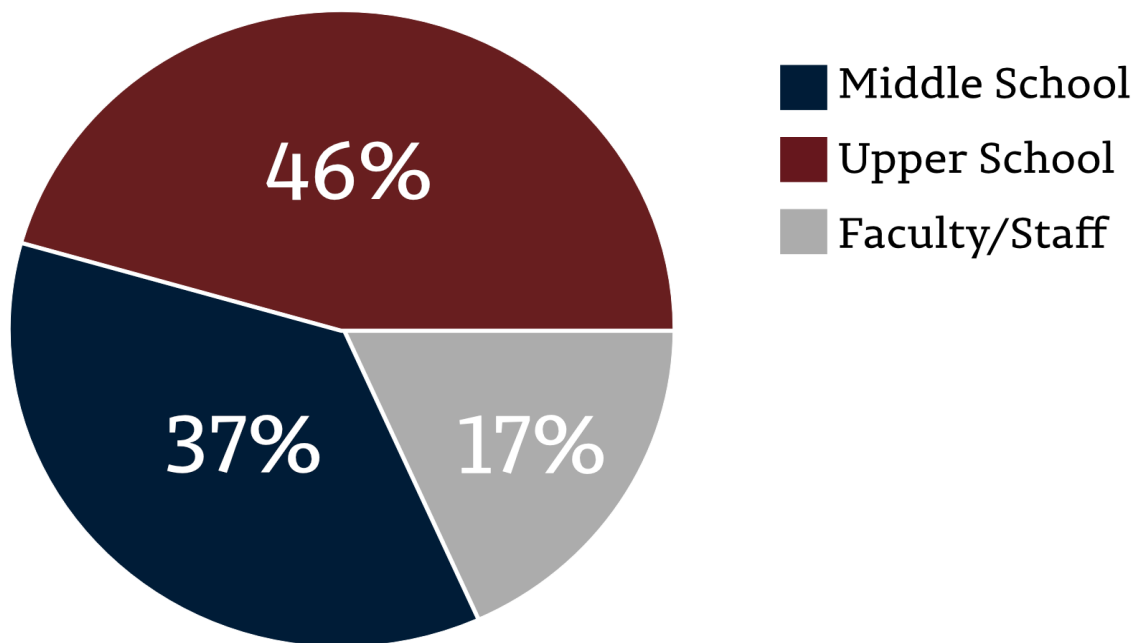
Social media security has often been a problem for apps, and 47 percent said that they were at least somewhat concerned about their safety. On the contrary, 40 percent are not worried about their security, and the rest have no comment or do not have social media. In the past years, people have become skeptical about how much information apps need from users. For example, in 2019, Mark Zuckerberg was sued for mishandling personal data on Facebook. This sparked much anger and confusion, leading people to become much more worried about their security on social media.

We also asked which country is the most significant threat to the security of the United States; the most popular answer was China with 39 percent, Russia with 32 percent, and Iran with 10 percent. This led to the next question asking if people were aware the Chinese government has ties to TikTok. Fifty-nine percent of respondents did know this, while 41 percent did not know this. The creator of TikTok, Zhang Yiming's company, ByteDance, has a history of trying to appease the Chinese government. Even recently, the United States government has banned anyone in the military from TikTok, for safety reasons. At the beginning of 2020, TikTok changed its policies and terms/services. In the changes, they stated that they would automatically collect information about each user and that they could share with anyone they desired. However, if one does not want this to happen, they would need to email a specific email address asking the app not to collect their information. The scary part is that they do not say what information they will gather or who they will share the information with. This caused a lot of backlash and fear over an app people use to have fun. People have begun to worry about a possible deal between TikTok and the Chinese government that would collect information on U.S. citizens and use it for malicious purposes.

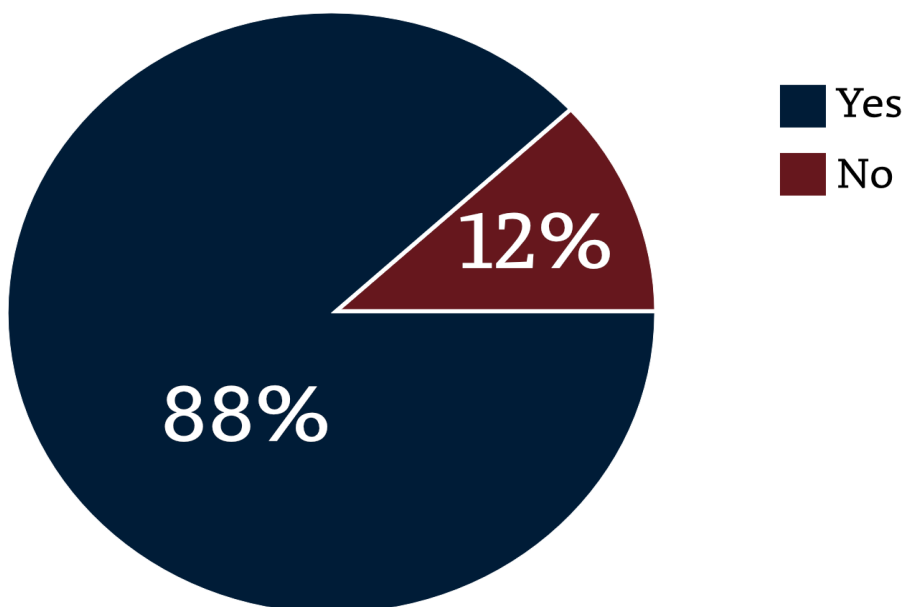
Overall, 57 percent of people who know of TikTok are concerned about the TikTok user data policy, while 43 percent are not. The astronomical change in TikTok's terms and conditions created much havoc and even led our government to ban it from anyone in the military. It is a very concerning topic that all users on TikTok should be aware of.



A What Form are you in?

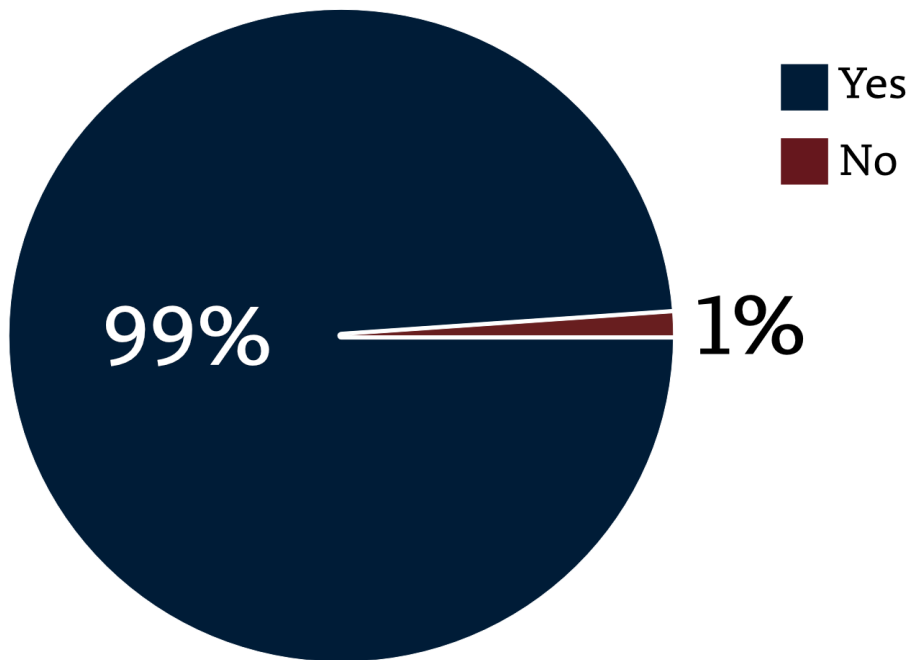


B Do you use any form of social media (ex. Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, etc.)?

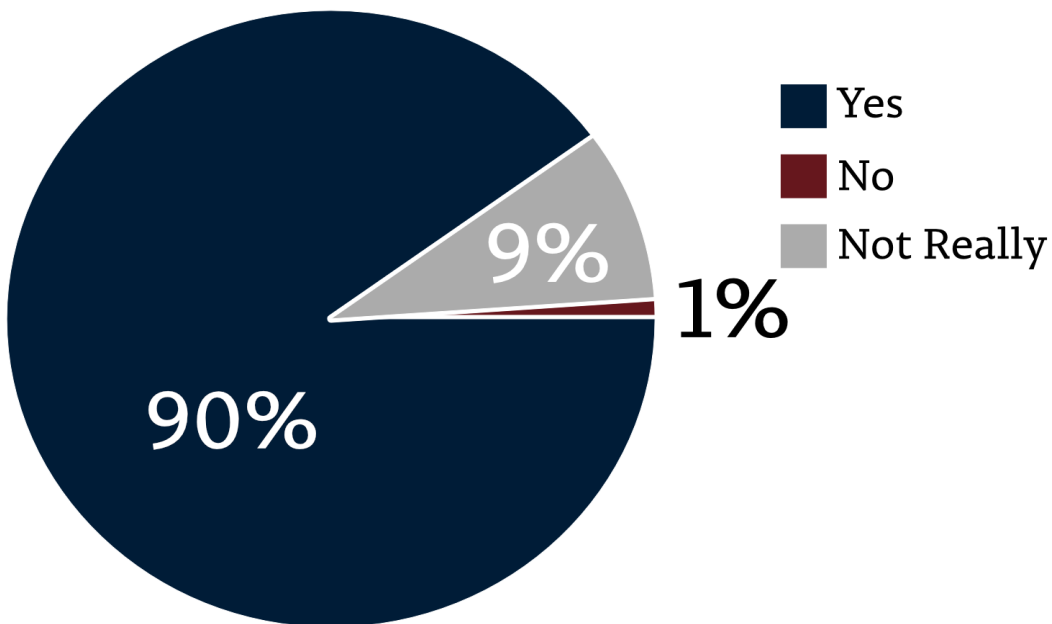




C Have you heard of TikTok?



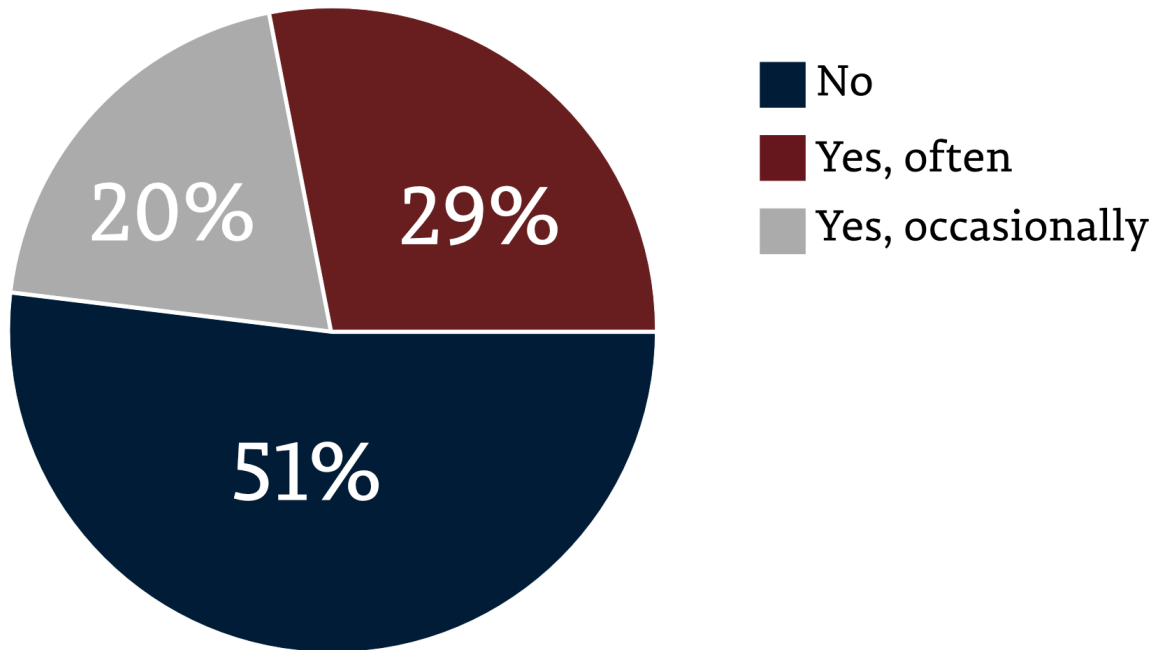
D Do you know what TikTok is?



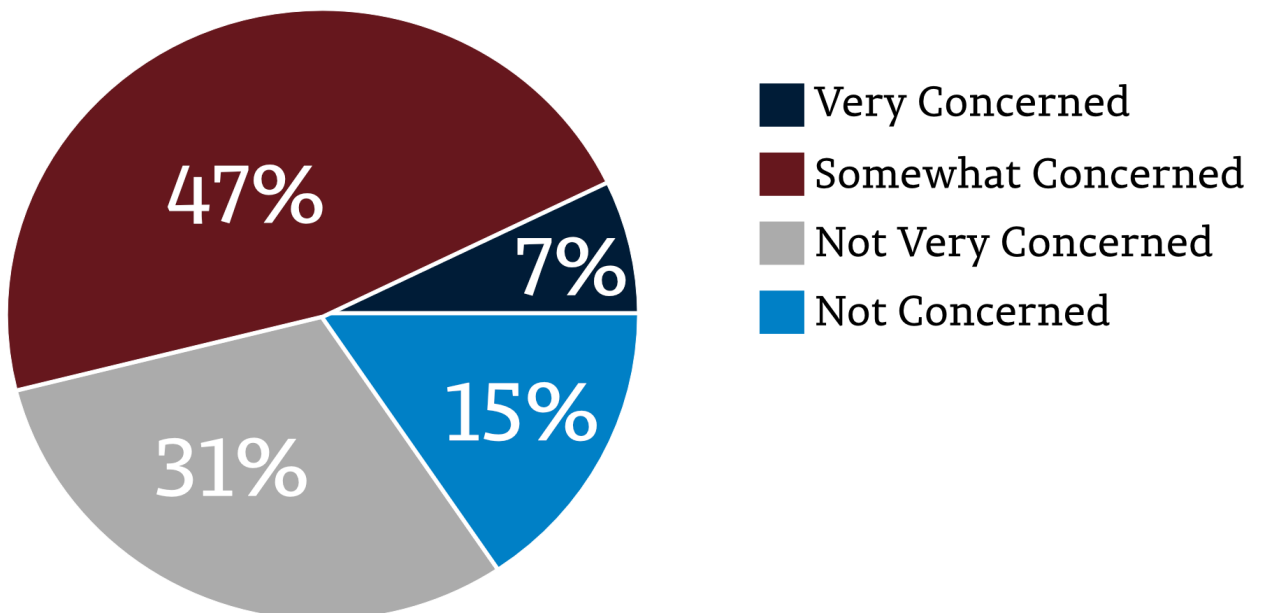


Data

E Do you use TikTok on a regular basis?



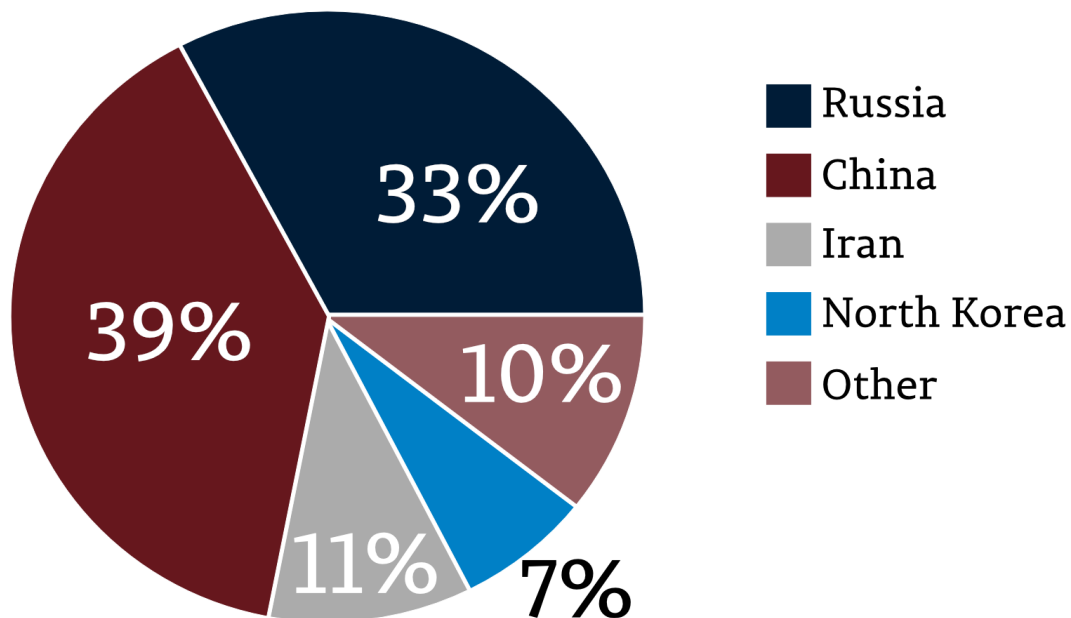
F If you use social media, how concerned are you about the security of your data?



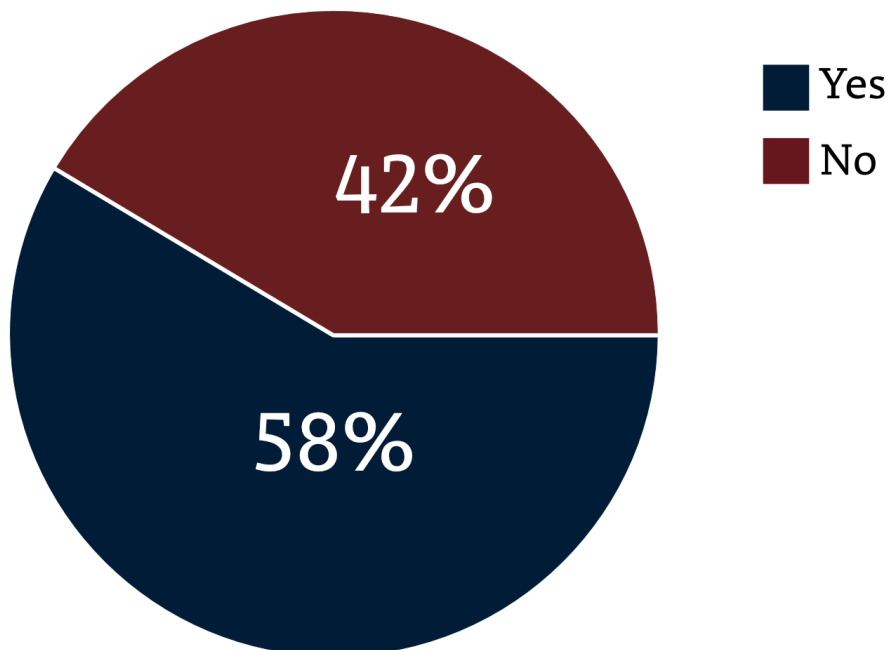


Data

G What nation do you consider the largest threat to the security of the United States?



H Are you aware that the Chinese government has ties to TikTok?



History | Current Events

